



NOW THEN.

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NOW THEN IS A FREE MONTHLY MAGAZINE FOR PEOPLE IN SHEFFIELD.

We aim to cultivate choice, voice and responsibility by providing a platform for independent art, trade, music, writing and local news. We support Sheffield's economy by only working with independent traders, community groups, charities and local government.

Almost all articles published in this magazine are written by members of the community, not professionals. If you don't like what you read or have something that needs to be said, get in touch. Your opinions make Now Then what it is.

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Enjoy the read.

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EDITORIAL.

Once again, the goose is getting fat and the sensory overload that is the Christmas advert season steps up a gear. It offends me. Big businesses know this is the time of year when you are most likely to make ill-advised, impulse purchases of things you know you don't need, or cave in to the pestering of an excitable child dreaming of something pricey. Like most advertising strategies, it is cynical and transparent but undeniably effective.

You might call me the Grinch, but I'm a little more constructive than that hairy green present thief, because I have some practical advice for you. I said the same thing last year, but it bears repeating: try and buy your presents, decorations and food from Sheffield traders. Rent a Christmas tree from Heeley City Farm. Buy your meat from Roneys. Stock up on festive spirit at the Dram Shop. Pick up presents from the Old Sweet Shop, Rare and Racy or Record Collector. Granted, it will take more work on your part, but the rewards for you and those around you are obvious – higher quality products from real people. Not Myleene fucking Klass. Live within your budget and don't let your Christmas be an M&S wet dream.

Peace on earth and all that jazz,

SAM.

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LOCALCHECK.

DON'T PLAY THE GAME.

HOSTED BY ALT-SHEFF.

So here it is, merry Christmas! Have you started buying presents, having fun, watching the high street sales rising and getting into debt? Don't play that game! I'd like to suggest seven Alt-Sheff-style alternatives. But first, who are we buying from?

Perhaps you go for bargains at Tesco, with its Cayman Islands capital gains tax avoidance and its aggressive "Tesco Town" expansion policy? "Every little hurts!" Look up "Tescopoly" to get the bigger picture. Heiress of the Tesco empire, politician Shirley Porter, has been described by Nicholas Lezard in The Guardian as "by a considerable margin, the most corrupt British public figure in living memory, with the possible exception of Robert Maxwell". Her secret programme shipped out boatloads of working class people from Westminster to asbestos-riddled flats to leave the borough a Conservative majority. An illegal class version of ethnic cleansing, and she was caught out. After years of running and salting away her fortune in Israel, she finally paid the fine. But Westminster remained Conservative. Are all the big shops linked to such corruption? Debenhams? It's owned by a string of investment management funds with international shareholders all over the world. Argos? Part of the Home Retail Group. Sounds homely, but if you want to be impressed by statistics showing the massive inequalities in our society, the largest general goods retailer in the UK has 80% of its shares in the hands of just 0.36% of the total shareholders. Just ask yourself who these corporate shareholders are. Pension funds? Don't make me laugh.

Very few of the (not) hard-earned profits end up in Sheffield, or in the more poverty-stricken parts of the world. This is the crux of the problem - wealth is 'created' (i.e. sucked out of) places, to end up concentrated somewhere else, probably with shiny happy people in various tax havens around the world. The rich elites pass wealth from one generation to the next through history, with few exceptions. It's a class structure thing. More unfair than Monopoly. It's us and them. Old Father Christmas-beard Karl Marx may have got some predictions wrong, but he was right about this.

So what are the alternatives to fattening up the rich this Christmas?

Buy from co-operatives. The idea is simple - joint ownership by workers or consumers makes co-ops different. Large or small, co-ops are the jokers in the pack among the capitalist shops.

Buy from locally-owned shops. It's what this magazine is all about. Local is good. OK, the profit may go from your pocket to someone in the nicer side of Sheffield, but that's better than Zurich or Texas, because it's more likely to keep the money circulating in Sheffield's economy.

Buy second-hand, maybe from charity shops. Young kids don't care if they get pre-enjoyed toys. Old books can be fascinating, especially if you slip a tenner in for something they really want!

Food? Buy organic if you can afford it. The chemical industry won't notice you've left their table, but for the small organic farmer every new customer is a boost.

Buy ethical. You can't get locally grown coffee or nuts, but how about Fair Trade? It's a way to upset the odds stacked against poor farmers, dealt a rotten hand by "free" trade and the legacy of colonialism. It won't change the whole game, but it's a win-win for the communities that get living wages and a chance to develop facilities like schools.

Buy at fayres and festivals to help local groups. At the time of writing, Alt-Sheff is listing Heeley City Farm's Christmas Fayre and Buxton Book Fair, for second-hand bargains. No doubt there's more to come.

One final thought: Don't spend, save. Or at least prepare for the debt you can't help running up. You don't need to owe the nasty banker, because Sheffield has a strong credit union. It's an alternative to banks, owned by all the members. Friendly and ethical financial services (I know from experience!) It's a good choice for a life free from money worries.

Details of all the above and more at alt-sheff.org.uk.



This month we feature the work of three photographers, all living and working in Sheffield - Shaun Bloodworth, Tom Jackson and Andy Brown. There's lots of reasonable photographers and very few great ones - and we are lucky to have three of the latter featured this month. All of them have a differing style they bring to the operation, through method, intention or technique, and distinctive images you can spot a mile off. Good photography is managing to make someone else see the world as you do. Take note.

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Hello,

I'm pleased that Now Then has asked me, as Chancellor, to state why the Comprehensive Spending Review will create a hopeful, prosperous Britain. There was a great danger that this country would have been bankrupted like Greece, and like them, been forced to speak a foreign language and eat feta cheese.

That was the future Labour had created for us.

Instead, we have created a new future, by making difficult decisions such as sacrificing the poor. As the BBC said, "Low income families with children are set to lose the most - about 5% of net income". But poor people generally don't know what 5% is, so it's not a problem. I'm not even sure they feel pain. Like fish.

We have got students to pay for their education, much as my parents paid for mine. We have axed the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA). One girl said to me, "I need EMA. My mum is on benefits and I am a full-time student at college. Without EMA I can't go to college. I will have to drop out and I don't want to do that." But people who aspire don't need help from big government. Rather than just give her an education or a permanent job, we will force her into unpaid work, four weeks a year, to drive our Big Society. Then, once our reinvigorated, prosperous Britain comes, there will be jobs for all. And if there aren't any jobs she should make one. That's what my family did, and we were only lowly baronets.

Then there's the fuss about housing benefits. Being a multi-millionaire, I'm fully in touch with the people, particularly people who want a certain standard of neighbours, not low-lives who can't get on. Given a choice between succeeding or living on an estate with drug addicts and mental cases, people will succeed or become drug addicts and mental cases. It really is that simple.

I was very pleased to read Sheffield Council's response to the Comprehensive Spending Review, 'Future Shape'. At first I thought it was one of those games little Lucius plays on his phone, where you get a thousand points each time a heptahedron mates with a triangle. Instead, it is a guide to cutting council services, with inspiring lines like "we will need to spend around £220 million less [a year] by 2014/15". When you think that Sheffield Council spends £440 million a year on staff, the saving could be made simply by letting half of them go and allowing them to stand on their own two feet.

Rather than agonising over the details, I suggest they simply use my own, more efficient way of producing a budget - I picked up the last council budget, flicked through it and randomly cut a few services:

COUNCIL AXE.

PEAR SHAPED.

"Corporate Complaints Service – provides a single access point for customers to comment, compliment or complain."

CUT. In our new, hopeful, prosperous, perfect Britain there will be no need to complain.

"Co-ordinate Government Inspections – liaise directly with Audit Commission on major Government inspections."

CUT. We cut the Audit Commission so Councils won't need to worry about things like liaising or standards.

"Premises and Assets – provides property and asset management"

CUT. Councils should not own property but sell it to the private sector, which can turn community centres, playgrounds and forests into things people really need, like shops.

"Community Services – including the Ranger Service, Sports Services, provision of allotments and heritage services."

CUT. The Big Society will take care of all this, because when the Council has stopped all their luncheon clubs, what else are retired people going to do if not look after allotments and old buildings?

The Spending Review was necessary because we all know that if a business is in debt, you need to cut costs. Yes, economists say it is more complicated than that, but I drift off and start thinking about Nanny. It might cost the economy nearly as much to pay a Council worker to be on benefits as it does to have them in a job and paying taxes, but that's if they don't find jobs in the private sector. And yes, "more than four unemployed people are chasing every job vacancy across the UK", but that desperation will be the foundation of our hopeful, prosperous Britain.

We are all in this together, from those forced to work for their benefits, to those who (like me) are the children of millionaires and have never done a hard day's work in their lives. I say to those who doubt we have everybody's best interests at heart, join us in our task. Join us, campaigners against abolishing the Education Maintenance Allowance (saveema.co.uk). Join us, Facebook campaigners 'False Economy' and 'One Million Against the Cuts'. Join us, demonstrators against public sector cuts (righttowork.org.uk, coalitionofresistance.org.uk).

It is the task of this generation, the task of the British people, to be great once again.

The Rt Hon George Osborne (MP, M.A., N/A, Not).



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27B/6.

THE MAGIC 8 BALL.
27BSLASH6.COM.

I sent an email to a friend recently, asking several different questions, and he replied with the single answer “Yes, probably.” It was obvious that he had either not read the email or could not be bothered answering my questions.

The next day when he emailed me, I replied using a Magic 8 Ball to generate the random answers.

From: Simon Dempsey

Have you got a typeface called Garamond Semibold? I have the Garamond and bold and italic but not the semibold. I am doing a poster for Cathy and I reckon garamond would look good.

As I see it, yes.

Which one? Yes you have the typeface or that it would look good on a poster?

Concentrate and ask again.

What the fuck? I need the typeface Garamond. Have you got it or not?

You may rely on it.

Send me the typeface dickhead.

From: Mark Pierce

Hey. Are you at work?

Signs point to yes.

What? Can you drop over on your way home from work and help me lift a piece of glass up onto a table? It is too heavy to lift.

My sources say no.

Are you serious? I tried lifting it a bit at a time and sliding books under it but I need heaps more books. Can you come for a quick drive now?

Ask again later.

Are you going to help me on the way back from work or not?

It is decidedly so.

Good. Fuck you are annoying sometimes.

From: Justine Murphy

Hi David, you forgot to send the attachment on your last email. Can you send it again please?

Justine

You may rely on it.

Ok. Can you resend it to me then please?

Without a doubt.

???? Did you attach it?

Don't count on it.

Are you fucking with me? Just attachment it ass hat.

From: Simon Dempsey

Are you online?

Concentrate and ask again.

Fuck you.



THE ROBINHOOD TAX →

YOU KNOW IT MAKES SENSE.

SARA HILL SPEAKING TO DAVID HILLMAN.

Of all the proposed solutions to the dismal state of this country's finances, the Robin Hood Tax makes most sense to us. It could raise as much as £20 billion per year in the UK alone. In short, the idea is to place a tiny tax of 0.05% on financial transactions like stocks, bonds, derivatives and foreign currency. It would only apply to organisations, so no individual would feel its effects. It could raise an estimated £250 billion per year globally to combat poverty, climate change and the economic downturn.

We spoke to David Hillman, director of Stamp Out Poverty and spokesperson for the Robin Hood Tax, about the UK campaign, its origins and why the tax didn't make it into the Comprehensive Spending Review.

What is the purpose of the Robin Hood Tax?

The Robin Hood Tax (RHT) campaign is for greater taxation of the financial sector. We don't believe that the sector is paying its fair share. We are for taxes on financial transactions, profits, bonuses, bank balance sheets. Our research shows that the sector could afford to pay £20 billion more than it does at the moment. The government has said it will create a bank levy [tax on bank balance sheets] of £2.5 billion and we think that is scandalously low, especially since at the same time George Osborne reduced corporation tax, so it's possible that he's taking with one hand and giving with the other. We are not satisfied with this, but perhaps without the campaign there would have been no movement in that direction whatsoever.

So there was some movement but it's unclear how positive that movement actually is?

Yes, and there's two aspects to it. One is that the levy is insufficient in volume and secondly, what is it really going to be used for? Our demands are that 50% should be used to protect jobs and services domestically and 50% should be spent in meeting our international commitments, not least tackling climate change.

What are the origins of the idea?

Its origins date back to James Tobin and the 'Tobin Tax', which proposed taxing foreign currency transactions. It was a high tax that tried to change the way the market operated and prevent some of the gambling and 'hot' money that was travelling the world. Since then the market in foreign exchange has become enormous and now runs at \$4 trillion (£2.5 trillion) a day. It was realised that a small tax on this volume of money would raise a vast amount and that is the seed of the RHT campaign.

Who is involved in the campaign and how did you get the celebrity interest?

I was able to meet with Richard Curtis and people from Comic Relief. Richard was looking for the next big campaign. He's the kind of person who can distil ideas into an excellent form for communication and he's a filmmaker so we shot the film with Bill Nighy, which was quickly followed by the second one with Sir Ben Kingsley. So after doing so much policy and media works, to make the campaign triangle function you need the popular side - you need people. This is what we've been working on with Richard and the celebrities have really gotten passionately behind the campaign.

Do you have any advice for other grass roots campaigners?

It's extremely good to have a tool that can be viralled and reach lots of people. When we started in February, we put a lot of effort into the development of our Facebook group, which has grown to 250,000 in a short period of time. The Bill Nighy film on the website has been seen by around a million people internationally. The use of new media is really important.

What arguments against the Robin Hood Tax have you encountered?

The first is usually that companies will get up and leave the country; therefore it'll do more damage than good. The answer to it is that what we are proposing is not unusual - there's already a 0.5% tax on shares, for example, and have business said they are not going to deal on the London Stock Exchange? No. In fact, it's the second largest stock exchange in the world. When Alistair Darling brought in his tax on bonuses, companies claimed their executives would quit the country, but a few months later a survey by the Times revealed that not one had actually left.

Another is that it will be passed on to ordinary consumers. This is a myth. We're talking about financial transactions tax on multimillion deals with government bonds, derivatives, forwards, futures and options. How many ordinary people do that kind of trade? The suggestion that financial institutions will still pass them on then depends on how competitive their industry is. The degree to which they pass on the cost will lead to their business going down. This is a very progressive form of taxation that will land on the richest players, not on the public.

Is it something that has to be instituted globally to be effective?

Some argue that you have to do it everywhere and if you don't all trade will just migrate to where the tax doesn't exist. We can see from the stock market example that's not the case, and it also depends on the design of the tax and whether there are global settlement systems in place. In foreign exchange, for instance, there is the Continuous Linked Settlement (CLS) Bank and 95% of all trades go through it, so if the government creates a tax it will be collected there. The claim that it has to be implemented everywhere or not at all is just a blocking argument. Over the last few decades, financial transaction taxes have been established in more than forty countries on temporary or permanent bases.

The RHT is a realistic aim within a system of financial capitalism. Is this because you are comfortable with the system as a whole, or because you wanted to make your goals more achievable than a complete overhaul?

It would be a mistake to see this as some kind of panacea. It is not about transforming capitalism. There are many deep-seated arguments about the nature of the continuation of power through elites and higher returns for capital rather than labour. These arguments will continue and probably become more heated as we feel the effects of the recession, but this particular campaign is not specifically addressing that area. It is saying here is a sector that has been living on Easy Street for thirty years and right now we need the public purse to have more money, which should not just be happening through cuts to services but through increasing the amount of taxation.

Do you feel that financial institutions are solely responsible for the current crisis?

They are clearly the most complicit; they were allowed to be so by governments that had essentially taken their eye off the ball. A good example is the credit default swaps market, which rose from almost nothing to being the size of the world economy with no regulation at all. That was one of the key causes of the crisis. Clearly a certain amount of blame needs to fall at the government's door, because it wasn't doing its job. Conversely, the market was completely irresponsible in creating products that could so spectacularly fail, causing governments to have to intervene on an unprecedented level.

A particularly ironic government intervention, since this sector normally argues against such things, doesn't it?

Equally ironic was the fact that, under the Bush administration, the US nationalised [mortgage firms] Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac. Of course, they wouldn't use the word nationalised, but that is what happened. I think at a deeper level the real crisis for neo-liberalism was that the market could not save itself.

Given that crisis for neo-liberalism and its philosophy, do you think it will lead to more comprehensive change?

What's really worrying is that it appears to be just carrying on regardless. We've met with people on the Treasury Select Committee and it appears we're in just as dangerous a situation now as we were before and that the rule changes Obama has pushed through are not deep enough. There is the new, very dangerous problem of high frequency trading, which has already led to a flash crash in America. This is where computer algorithms chase price trends at high speed and can move huge volumes of money, which is totally destabilising. My feeling is that the root causes have not yet been changed sufficiently.

What barriers prevented the inclusion of the RHT in the comprehensive spending review?

The coalition has said they will look at a financial activities tax, which has the wonderful acronym of FAT. The FAT tax for fat cats, as we like to look at it, would be a tax on profits and remunerations. We know the Treasury has created a team to look at how to implement this and we are pressing to find out what their timetable is. We think we should have seen a taxing of the banking sector in the review of £20 billion and so that is an opportunity missed, but in terms of the campaign it simply means we have to redouble our efforts, focus on increasing the bank levy and going after profits and remunerations, then getting the rest of the £20 billion from a FAT tax. Around the time of the review, we got a lot of media coverage and carried out stunts outside the Treasury office, boosting our number of supporters by 11, 000 in two days. Clearly, there's an appetite to move this forward.

Are there international RHT campaigns?

Yes there are. I was speaking to people from Norway only yesterday, who have just launched their campaign. There are campaigns in Australia, where they have a kangaroo in a green mask as their logo. There's also '00 Cinque' in Italy and 'Steuer Gagen Armut' in Germany. In the US it's not specifically a Robin Hood Tax campaign, more a campaign against financial speculation that brings together the trade unions, development and health NGOs and the green movement, who have not been natural bedfellows before so it's taken a lot of work. France is coming together well because President Sarkozy, despite his unpopular pension reforms, has gone out on a limb to support the financial transaction tax internationally and is one of the leaders who may champion it next year. Given the French G8 and G20 votes, developing a strong campaign there is very important at the moment.

What can people in Britain do to help?

Go to the website, watch the films, and join the Facebook groups. We encourage everyone to write to their MPs. The argument the government gives is that we're all in this together. It isn't fair that we are going to be paying increased VAT from January and the banks are getting away scot free. That's our message, and people should ask their MPs what they will do about making the banks pay their fair share. We need to keep the pressure on.

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DEDUCTIONS.

HOW OUR TAXES COULD BE SPENT.

TOMMY BLANK.

I think it's time that we, the people, decide what our taxes are spent on. A bold statement, I know, but allow me to elaborate. Each month, those of us who work for a living frown utterly forlorn at our pay slips and in particular, the deductions. And the services our hard-earned tender goes towards tend to be the ones we moan about the most.

The NHS is always against the wall for being fundamentally rubbish. Wave upon wave of stories about some poor bastard who went in for a root canal and came out with a vagina for a face lend ample support to this theory. I've had a few run-ins with our National Health Service myself, and they were admittedly, on the whole, a bit shit. Mixing up my chart with someone else's and sending me away to wait for (literally) months before seeing a specialist who, ever true to his title, came across as rather special. I know they save lives, but can't they do it with the efficiency and professionalism we expect from say, the humble taxi driver? You never hear about cabbies causing pile-ups, ploughing into large oaks or replacing people's kidneys with ocelots. It makes even less sense when you consider that the annual bread-winnings of the highest earners in the NHS surpass those of the Prime Minister and the Secretary of Defence put together.

But public service aside - admittedly we do actually need it - the Government's frivolous spending of taxpayer's cash has us footing the bill for some pretty trivial endeavours these days.

Take the state visit from the Pope a few months back as an example. First of all, whatever the U.N. says, the Vatican is not a state, and by that measure the arrival of Benny the Sixteenth doesn't warrant state visit status. In the words of Stephen Fry, it's an "accident of history that [the Vatican] has an autocratic absolute monarchy" at all. But that's a separate debate altogether. What I'm contesting is the fact that the taxpayer paid for his dirty weekend away, and pays for any state visit for that matter. If his visit isn't helping to cure cancer or pave the way for world peace, he can either pay for it himself or stay in his bedroom and learn to use Skype like the rest of us.

Personally, having learnt that the policing of the Papal visit alone cost the taxpayer in excess of £1 million, I would have quite liked to see somebody try it. You know, just for entertainment value, to see if Scotland Yard's best men are worth their salt. Perhaps an elaborate hang glider attack with a flamethrower to really get our money's worth. I don't wish any harm on the man; I'd just like to see the goods before I buy them.

But what would I use our taxes for, if not for highly paid, inadequate GPs and excessive security measures for Rome's frail little hobbit?

If it was up to me, we'd get pick-me-ups; little pick-me-ups to get us through the day. Once a month, the government buys us all a tasty cream cheese bagel, or cushions the blow of education cuts with Cornettos all round. The cabinet could make light of their tyrannous foreign policy with a handful of Liquorice Allsorts through each and every letterbox. That sort of thing.

Admittedly, it's perhaps not the most practical idea, but if not confectionery, then consider monetary rewards. As a nation we happily throw our money away on pointless gambling, so why not introduce a tax lottery? I'd be far less reluctant to hand over a healthy portion of my earnings if I knew I was in with a chance of winning big. One taxpayer a month bags a million, with the only stipulation being that you actually have to be an honest working citizen to enter. That way we hit two birds with one stone and avoid another Michael Carroll, the self proclaimed 'King Chav' who is back on the dole after blowing his £9.7m Lotto fortune on drugs and prostitutes. If you were expecting a reference to Wayne Rooney after that last sentence, may I remind you that it's still Now Then you're reading, as sensationalist and misled as my musings may seem.

There are too few similarities in the way we deal with things as citizens in our day-to-day life and the way the country spends our cash. We don't want to interfere in wars overseas, we don't want our MPs to own two houses and we certainly don't want the fucking Olympics. We treat ourselves with chocolate bars and peculiar Thai spa treatments in which tiny fish nibble at the dried skin on our aching and overworked feet. We buy glorified kindling with fairy lights attached and stick them in vases in our living rooms because it makes us feel cosy. We queue up for iPhones and Harry Potter books that are essentially slightly rebranded versions of the last ones we queued up for.

It's high time our national spending reflected that.

For daily musings, follow twitter.com/tommyblank
Illustration by Jonathan Brown - letters@jonathanbrown.org



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Media Lens is a UK-based media-watch project, which offers authoritative criticism of mainstream media bias and censorship, as well as providing in-depth analysis, quotes, media contact details and other resources.

Our aim is to encourage the general population to challenge media managers, editors and journalists who set news agendas that traditionally reflect establishment and elite interests. We hope to raise public awareness of the underlying systemic failings of the corporate media to report the world around us honestly, fairly and accurately. Fundamentally, we wish to reduce suffering wherever it occurs.

MEDIA BURY DOCUMENTS REVEALING ISRAEL’S DELIBERATE POLICY OF NEAR-STARVATION FOR GAZA.

Israel has been forced to reveal what Palestinians and other observers on the ground have known for a long time: that the blockade of Gaza is state policy intended to inflict collective punishment, not to bolster Israeli “security”.

An Israeli human rights group has won a legal battle to compel the Israeli government to release three important documents. These outline state policy for permitting the transfer of goods into Gaza prior to the May 31st attack on the peace flotilla in which nine people were killed by Israeli forces. The group, Gisha – Legal Center for Freedom of Movement, is demanding Israeli transparency. Meanwhile, Israel refuses to release documents on the current version of blockade policy which was “eased” after international condemnation following the flotilla attack.

The released documents, whose existence Israel had denied for eighteen months, reveal that the state approved “a policy of deliberate reduction” of basic goods, including food and fuel, in the Gaza Strip. Gisha Director Sari Bashi explains:

“Instead of considering security concerns on the one hand, and the rights and needs of civilians living in Gaza on the other, Israel banned glucose for biscuits and the fuel needed for regular supply of electricity – paralyzing normal life in Gaza and impairing the moral character of the State of Israel. I am sorry to say that major elements of this policy are still in place.” [1]

As Saeed Bannoura of the International Middle East Media Center reports, the Israeli government imposed a deliberate policy “in which the dietary needs for the population of Gaza are chillingly calculated, and the amounts of food let in by the Israeli government measured to remain just enough to keep the population alive at a near-starvation level. This documents the statement made by a number of Israeli officials that they are ‘putting the people of Gaza on a diet’.” [2]

Bannoura adds: “This release of documents also severely undermines Israel’s oft-made claim that the siege is ‘for security reasons’, as it documents a deliberate and systematic policy of collective punishment of the entire population of Gaza.”

When Israel and the United States were reacting to Hamas’s election victory in Gaza in January 2006, long-time Israeli government adviser Dov Weisglass stated: “The idea is to put the Palestinians on a diet, but not to make them die of hunger.” [3]

The released documents contain actual equations used by the Israeli government to calculate the exact amounts of food, fuel and other necessities needed to do exactly that [4]. The policy is all the more disturbing, indeed repellent, given that almost half the people of Gaza are children under the age of eighteen. One might reasonably conclude that Israel has deliberately forced the undernourishment of hundreds of thousands of children in direct violation of international law and the Fourth Geneva Convention.

Media Response? A Polite Silence.

Our searches of the Nexis newspaper database show that, as far as we could determine, not a single UK newspaper has reported the release of these damning Israeli documents. We widened our searches to include all English-language publications covered worldwide by Nexis. We found just two: one from the Palestine News Network on October 21 and one in Palestine Chronicle on November 6.

We were so surprised by the uniform silence across the English-language press that we asked US-based media analyst David Peterson to check our findings. He was able to do so, spelling out his search results as follows in an email to Media Lens on November 11th:

Major World Publications: zero

All News (English): two (the same two that we found, as mentioned above)

Broadcast Transcripts: zero

A search of the Factiva database (covering all major English-language newspapers and wire services) found the same results. Peterson commented: “No mentions in any of the major English-language newspapers or wire services of the fact that someone had revealed the actual Israeli government policy towards the Gaza Palestinians is to force a ‘deliberate reduction’ in their access to the necessities of everyday survival.”

It takes a peculiar form of social malaise for this astonishing media silence to be maintained in ostensibly free societies.

The Fiercely “Independent” BBC

On November 11th, an online BBC article reported on the Gaza blockade but made no mention of the released documents [5]. Reporter Jon Donnison wrote: “The UN says there has been ‘no material change’ for people in Gaza since Israel announced it was ‘easing’ its economic blockade of the Palestinian territory.”

Jon Ging, the head of UN operations in Gaza, said few people had noticed any difference: “There’s been no material change for the people on the ground here in terms of their status, the aid dependency, the absence of any recovery or reconstruction, no economy.” Ging continued: “The easing, as it was described, has been nothing more than a political easing of the pressure on Israel and Egypt.”

The BBC gave the final word to Yigal Palmor, a spokesman for the Israeli foreign ministry: “Why is the border blockaded? Because the territory has been overtaken by a declared terror movement.” This assertion that the Gaza blockade is motivated by security concerns went unchallenged. World News Today, presented by Zeinab Badawi on BBC4, broadcast a piece by Donnison along similar lines to his article [6].

We wrote to Jon Donnison and asked whether he was aware that the Israeli human rights group Gisha had obtained Israeli government documents confirming that the collective punishment of Gaza is based on politics, not security. We asked him on November 11th: “Have you reported the release of these documents? Will you be pursuing it in a new article?”

We emailed again on November 16th but have received no response to date.

Compare and contrast the BBC’s performance on this story with a new Foreign Office-sponsored piece on the BBC by news presenter Zeinab Badawi: “Transparency, accountability of government actions is absolutely crucial. And frankly that’s the role of the media. You know, shining a harsh spotlight on truths and sunlight, after all, is a very strong antiseptic, isn’t it?” [7]

Badawi added that “the BBC’s constitution means that we absolutely, absolutely cherish and protect and fight for our independence. We don’t even have an arm’s length relationship with the government, we just don’t deal with the government at all.”

Badawi continued the self-adulation: “It [the BBC] really is a vital, vital tool for the dissemination of information in all sorts of ways. All these things have really served to underscore that freedom of speech that we have in this country. And I suppose the BBC best epitomises that tradition.”

She concluded: “I’m very proud to be an employee of the BBC.”

[1] Gisha: Legal Center for Freedom of Movement, ‘Due to Gisha’s Petition: Israel Reveals Documents related to the Gaza Closure Policy’, October 21, 2010; <http://www.gisha.org/index.php?intLanguage=2&intItemId=1904&intSiteSN=113>

[2] Saeed Bannoura, ‘Israeli government documents show deliberate policy to keep Gazans at near-starvation levels’, International Middle East Media Center, November 6, 2010 21:32; <http://www.imemc.org/article/59843>

[3] ‘Hamas readies for government, Israel prepares sanctions’, Agence France Presse, February 16, 2006.

[4] ‘Submitted to Gisha in the framework of a Freedom of Information Act Petition, AP 2744/09 Gisha v. Defense Ministry’, Appendices B, C and D; <http://gisha.org/UserFiles/File/HiddenMessages/DefenseMinistryDocumentsRevealedFOIAPetition.pdf>

[5] Jon Donnison, ‘UN: No change in Gaza despite easing of Israel blockade’ BBC news online, November 11, 2010 Last updated at 00:25; <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-11731695>

[6] BBC World News Today, BBC4, Thursday, November 11, 2010, 7pm; <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KwxZXfRTdJO>

[7] ‘Zeinab Badawi says freedom of expression is cornerstone of democracy in Britain’, November 5, 2010; http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4rQM-kMPoy0&feature=player_embedded

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FEAR.

MONEY, STAFFIES AND THE APOCALYPSE.

ROBIN LOVELACE.

Fear. The dreaded death call saying a loved one is in hospital. You are fired. Panic-buying, petrol stations empty, China has declared war against Taiwan and suicide is the only way to escape eternal doom.

Fear is a basic emotion that we share with animals. It evolved to help our ancestors flee from predators, stop dead at the edge of a precipice and plan a drastic course of action as the winter’s food supply ends. The reason why fear is such a powerful emotion is its ability to grip us, shoving other emotions like joy, sadness, trust and disgust out of the window. Put another way, fear scrunches up our subconscious to-do list and rewrites it with just one entry in large sprawling capitals: ACT or, sometimes, DON’T ACT. While sadness, for example, is something to be dwelt on, delved into and dealt with later, fear demands attention now.

Like other emotions, fear provides an automatic cue that influences our responses to certain stimuli. Due to its evolutionary roots, psychologists suggest it can have a particularly strong influence over the human mind: ‘Fear, in particular, evolved to protect humans against threats to survival, and its evolutionary-based effects continue to influence modern humans despite the changed nature of the threats we face’ [1]. Although clearly advantageous in the past, can fear help us in the urban jungle, where snakes, murderous tribes and other prehistoric threats have vanished? The physical and social environments in which we live have moved on a great deal, but our brains are pretty much the same as they were 10,000 years ago. It is this mismatch, between our stone-aged brain and the technologically advanced civilization in which we live, that I’ll tackle in this article.

Most of the dangers that forged our forefathers’ sense of fear are long dead and gone. The risky savannah became a paved settlement, the dangerous cave became a house and most modern lives now operate in blissful separation from the perils of the prehistoric world. But we still have the fear instinct, which, starved of real threats such as sabre-toothed tigers, will feed on perceived perils that may be pure figments of the imagination. In my modern-day jungle, I see money (lack of) replacing snakes, beefed-up dogs known as Staffies replacing tigers and some abstract dread of the Apocalypse replacing the urgency to prepare for tribal warfare or a hard winter.

It’s hard to tell how much others share such deep-seated fears - it’s not the kind of thing that makes polite conversation - but some have stated that fear is the major driving force in society [2] and in terms of fiction, scary real-life events drive some of the most gripping stories going [3]. Horror films deal with obvious sources of dread, like death, torture and dictatorship, but what about fear in the daily grind of everyday life?

In rich countries today, everyday fears are more likely to spring from workplace worries, social insecurities or anxiety about the future. Such sources of fear - banal, day-to-day and sometimes imagined - are a far cry from the emotion that saved the hunter-gatherer from harm. But these things, represented by money, Staffies and the Apocalypse, dominate in Sheffield and other places where violent crime is rare, natural disasters are distant and torture is banned. This idea cannot be proven, but there is good evidence to suggest these everyday fears have a big impact on our lives.

First, money. Traditional or ‘neoclassical’ economics categorises our lives into ‘producer’ and ‘consumer’ modes, something hammered into us by the mass media from an early age. You go to work in producer mode, hunt in the capitalist Savannah for a decent hide of dinero and go home to your friends and family as a successful consumer - the comfy sofa, the varied and exciting products available and the weekly roller-coaster of the Friday and Saturday binge. This is a vision I see presented and adopted all around me, defining many people’s lives, and it’s scary. It’s a vision in which you must earn enough within the system to be able to enjoy the fruits of ‘success’ it has to offer.

So you hunt harder in producer mode and consume better in consumer mode. What’s the latest iPhone? Which bars to go to? What clothes to wear? The implication of this mindset is that you must sacrifice the producer side of your life - holding down a shite job, sucking up to colleagues or backstabbing rivals - to maximise your life as a consumer. This vision is presented to us every day in adverts but is almost completely wrong. As pointed out in the classic **Small Is Beautiful: Economics As If People Mattered** by E. F. Schumacher [4], the producer-consumer model cannot account for people who enjoy their job, cook for a hobby or volunteer. His point is that we can be producers and consumers at the same time (and I don’t mean browsing Facebook at work), having a wicked time while producing something useful in the process. Taken further, this idea can become Epicurean, whereby happiness is achieved by wanting less, not getting more. You could end up working fewer hours, wasting less time desiring material goods and, if Epicurus was right, also be happier. These alternatives to the producer-consumer world view mean you can avoid the doom of monetary warfare and the fear of destitution.

Second, fear of people also seems to be blown out of all proportion by the mainstream media. Paedophiles, for example, are frequently used to justify a range of mollycoddling rules, imposed by state and parents alike, banning children from going out alone, swimming or even cycling to school. These same actions that reduce (by a tiny amount) the probability of a child being molested will increase (by a large amount) the chances of them dying from obesity, square eyes or soul-destroying boredom. In this example of the damage that our capacity for fear can reap, fear is not caused by another problem - fear (of the wrong thing) is the problem itself.

Third and worst, according to a major review of workplace silence [1], is the fear of those who are higher up in the human pecking order. Again, this has roots in our evolutionary past: ‘For the low status member, a confrontation with a high status member could end in death or loss of reproductive fitness.’ Translated into today’s workplace hierarchies, the evidence suggests that people are ‘biologically prepared to fear challenging authority’, preferring to remain silent and get on with the job. If people are unaware of how their feelings are influenced by such powerful evolutionary drivers, how can they possibly deal with them effectively? By being aware of the baggage of the human mind, people will surely be able to understand themselves better and avoid being a slave to animal instincts.

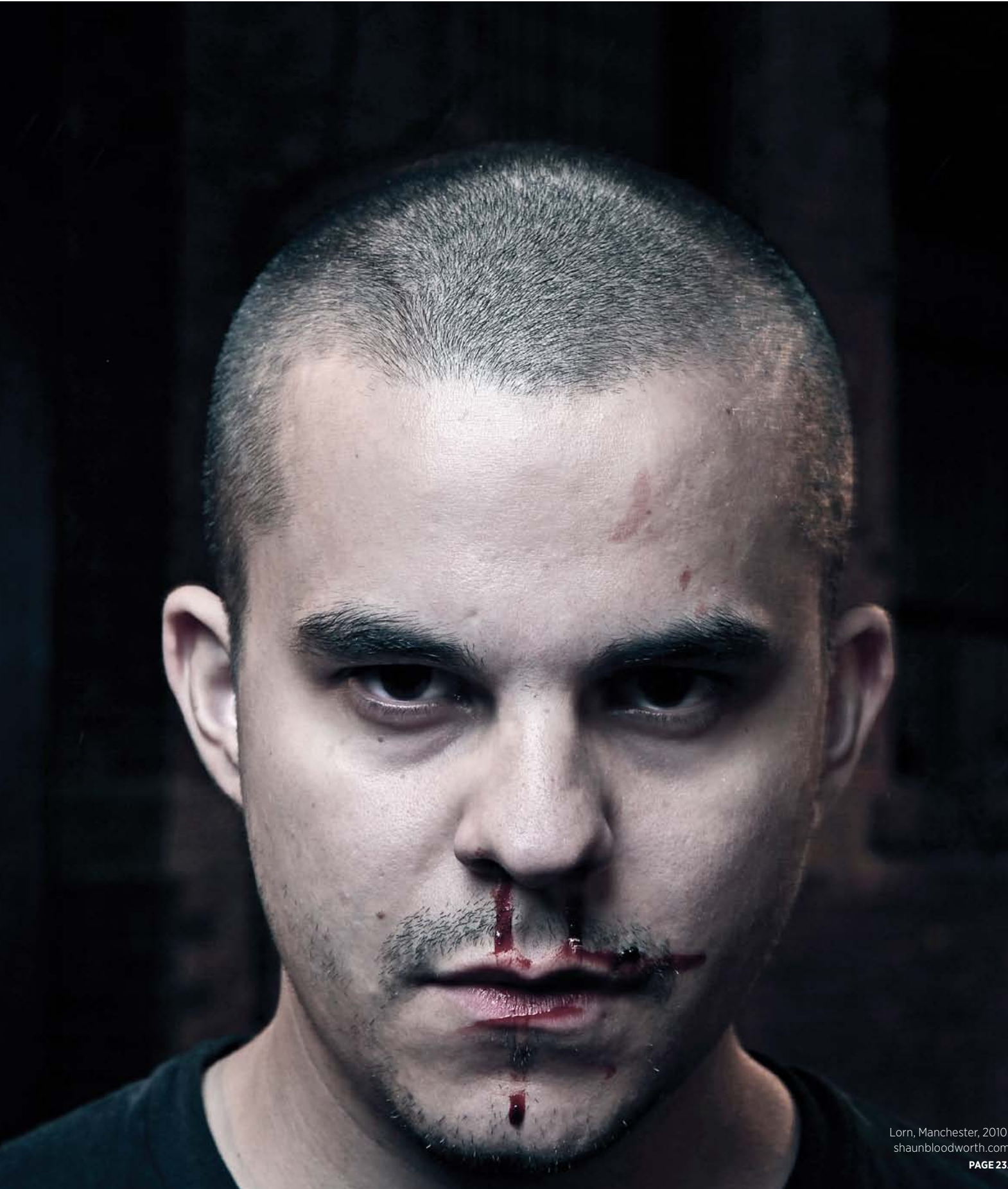
I’m not trying to say that fear is bad. It’s obviously very good in some situations, like when crossing a busy road or checking that a friend is okay. My point is that our evolutionary past makes us Homo sapiens prone to fear things in our everyday lives that do not pose a threat in reality. People who understand this may be better equipped to deal with oppressive economic, media-manufactured fears. Take some time to think about fear’s influence on your life and spread the word.

[1] Kish-Gephart, J. J., et al. Silenced by fear: The nature, sources, and consequences of fear at work. *Research in Organizational Behavior* 29 (2009): 163-193.

[2] Glassner, B., 2010. *The Culture of Fear: Why Americans Are Afraid of the Wrong Things: Crime, Drugs, Minorities, Teen Moms, Killer Kids, Mutant Microbes, Plane Crashes, Road Rage, & So Much More*, Basic Books.

[3] Most notably - McCarthy, C., 2010. *The Road*, Pan Macmillan.

[4] Schumacher, E. F. *Small is Beautiful: Economics As If People Mattered*, Harper & Row, 1975.



Lorn, Manchester, 2010.
shaunbloodworth.com

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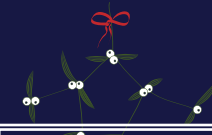


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HIDING.

It ended the week my father spent
unplugging TV's,
scraping skirting boards
and unhinging doors

so our voices flowed through rooms
like yolks from broken eggs.
Mother baked continually, carefree.
Scones dried our mouths; crumbs cluttered
where a carpet used to lay.

She smiled at the stodge of quietness,
closing herself, as always, like a book
and hiding for days in pages filled with recipes
for the family we hadn't turned out to be.

I splayed my toes like ducks' feet,
waddled, towelled, down the corridor,
counting footsteps from bath to bed,
slopping my starchy tongue around my mouth.

My brother did things to his girlfriend regardless;
one scream burst the bubbles in the tub,
curled the last carpet at the corners
and sank my mother's soufflés -

Paused in space, we were like
a neighbourhood of houses with no stairs,
sunken in our tortoise shells, stumped
starched and muted like a shopping channel.

I dripped on the floorboards beneath me –
a droplet bounced off my father's nose
in the room below. We'll do this
like a leaking tap.

KYLIE ROGERS.

FIRST JOURNEY ALONE OVER MOTHER CAP.

If you cycle directly between two points
high on the moors
you can find the night,
though the lights of Sheffield really will glitter
as you find the true height
of the hill.
This space is so much more satisfying,
this winged space to Matlock
between Mother Cap and the Cowper Stone.

The budding dark by the road
sits undisturbed
I slide through
not quite unnoticed.

Starting the descent at Froggat
the owls have joined me
for a blind, silent, skein flight,
exalting in the gaping cold
we skin the hill
away from the cliff.

CLAIRE CARTER.



BEST FARE FINDER.

We pass through
different cities at night;
Water glistens on the rails,
As this corridor of light
Trundles past commuters
Shuffling idle on a platform
Who are always too early or late.

Newspapers damp under their armpit,
Hair hanging like old ties
Drying in the rain
And home on their mind.

*Dear Passengers, we regret to inform you
That someone stole the signalling lights at Derby,
And we will be delayed for some time.*

*We apologise for any inconvenience this may cause.
We are working to fix this problem as soon as possible.*

I imagine they are playing rock paper scissors
In the control room,
Ready to send someone out with a torch,
A flask and a packet of hobnobs.
A human lighthouse, waving the trains on.

A man next to me eats his fourth packet of crisps,
Folds the wrapping into perfect quarters,
Slipping them into his back left pocket.

A girl takes half an hour on a text,
Sulkily strumming its plastic frame.
I see her mouth etch two x's,
Then three, settling each brush stoke
With a kiss of teeth.

We wait patiently for our destinations
To present themselves,
As a sudden thump rattles past the windows,
Startling those deep in sleep.

Our current estimated time of arrival is ten thirty-eight.

A single horn blows out from somewhere.

A greeting or a farewell.

The message seems incomplete.

JOE KRISS.

BIG HOUSE.

One night sky meets us
and as the crow flies
so do we.

Us who were so pretty
in our youth.

JAMES LOCK.

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Sheffield is a smouldering hotbed of talent. Shaun serves as perfect example of what we do well - no nonsense, real work delivered to the highest standard. The tools may have changed but the attitude has not. We make good things in this city.

WHAT STARTED YOU TAKING PHOTOS?

A friend called Pat Garbutt on an Arts Foundation at Psalter Lane. He was streets ahead of everyone on the course - did a project about Gleadless Valley in 1986 where he lived, and how much he hated it. I found it a very powerful way of putting a point across. His brother-in-law was a well-known gallery photographer in the 80s and taught at the Documentary Photography course at Newport, then the best course in the UK. He went the following year and I followed a couple of years later after I'd put a folio together. I never really had a 9-5 job, so I don't know anything different, and much of what I've learnt has come from the school of hard knocks.

CAN YOU DESCRIBE THE PROCESS OF STARTING A NEW PIECE?

It depends on a number of factors. The best pictures always happen by chance - speak to the person direct, arrange a time and make it up from there. I used to spend a lot of time at the start of my career worrying about what to do, but now I tend to just turn up and react to what happens. That just comes down to years of experience .

WHERE DO YOU GET YOUR INSPIRATION FROM?

All sorts of places - music , painting, but mainly from film. Interestingly, a lot of photography leaves me cold. It's rare I come across a book of photos that I think are unique as a body of work. I think the late 80s and 90s were the golden age for photography - Chris Killip and Eugene Richards. Complete commitment, very inspirational for me. I get sent a lot of magazine and advertising images, youtube videos and music from my friends Stuart Hammersley of GiveUpArt and Nick Bax from Humanstudio , which can subconsciously create new ideas.

TOOLS. WHAT DO YOU USE REGULARLY AND WHAT'S YOUR FAVOURITE?

The development of high-powered battery flash lighting is key to how I work now. I can set up anywhere without worrying about being tied to an electrical socket. That and the computer, which allows you to work in a way that you couldn't have dreamt of 20 years ago .

WHAT OTHER ARTISTIC MEDIA HAVE HAD AN EFFECT ON YOUR WORK?

Experimental music, of course. It's something that runs in the background of everything I do now. And Design. I like designers. They collect beauty, whether that be physical or thoughts, so they are great to be around.

HOW DO YOU SPEND YOUR DAYS?

I work best when I'm happy and confident, so I try and encourage things that make my life as easy as possible. I try to meet with friends or colleagues most days, spend time reading lots on the internet, looking for ideas, developing projects. Taking pictures is a small part of the working week and getting to that point can take time. I'm busiest at night, when things are quiet and the kids are in bed. I don't have a studio. I tend to work from either my living room or at the kitchen table, so it allows me to work when it suits me and not during specific hours .

OUT OF YOUR RECENT WORK, WHICH PIECE HAVE YOU ENJOYED MAKING THE MOST?

Probably the picture of Lorn. It was a very easy shoot - two people who knew exactly what was going to work but without getting too hung up about it. I contacted Lorn on Twitter and arranged a date when he was at HoyaHoya in Manchester. I had the basic idea of getting a bag of blood from a butcher to spill all over the floor, but I couldn't get hold of one. So I picked up a tube of fake blood, put a couple of small drops into his nose and got him to wipe them to one side. He's got one of those deadpan looks that some people are blessed with, very easy picture. I think we both knew it had worked. Like him a lot, a very talented musician.

I've also worked a great deal recently with MaryAnne Hobbs, she is again very easy to work with, a person who ' gets' the whole process so that we can both go with the flow of an idea .

HOW HAS YOUR WORK EVOLVED OVER TIME?

I spent a long time working on jobs that I didn't want to do, before beginning a long process of changing it so that all I did was work I enjoyed. It's purely down to confidence, and a bit of luck with certain jobs. I now know that certain clients will come to me to work in a particular way - that being as undiluted as possible - and it's that point that we all try and work towards. The content has also gone from being about the subject to a partnership between the subject and myself. It's good to develop ideas on the spot that you are both happy with.

HOW HAS ART IN GENERAL CHANGED SINCE YOU STARTED?

I think technology has changed things incredibly for the good. Now you can make your own videos, post them on a public space and no-one thinks anything of it. When I was 18, there was a tradition of having to learn a craft, so things took longer and you weren't really taken too seriously until you had experience. Finding reference material was so difficult before the internet as well. You almost had to be part of an "art set" to find interesting film/photography/writing. Consequently now, people aren't scared of consuming art, which is an amazing change in such a short space of time .

WHAT ARE YOU CURRENTLY WORKING ON?

All sorts. I'm constantly photographing the music scene with portraits (three this week), planning interactive work with a music/design collective, looking at short films with a US music producer and a documentary about cities. Of course, all of this is offset with commercial work which helps fund personal projects.

ANY TIPS ON HOW TO SURVIVE MAKING MONEY FROM YOUR WORK?

In music? Unless you can work with major labels, forget it. It's a calling for me. I do it because I want to leave something behind for historical purposes. Most of my pictures can be ripped from my website. Copyright means very little and we are all guilty of infringing it. The musicians I give out my work to always ask without exception, though, so I use other photographic work to fund all of this One thing I learnt very quickly was that regardless of the job, always work at 100%. People are paying you, so you owe it to them.

WHAT MAKES YOU SMILE IN ART?

David Shrigley.

GOOD ADVICE YOU WISH YOU'D BEEN TOLD EARLIER?

Don't talk about projects or ideas too much or you'll talk your way out of them. Just do them.

shaunbloodworth.com

TITLE PHOTO - Joy Orbison , South Bank , London , 2009.

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TOM JACKSON.

WHAT STARTED YOU TAKING PHOTOS?

I guess for me it's from travelling as a kid. I used to go on a lot of caravan touring holidays with my parents around France and other parts of Europe. Most places were in the middle of nowhere. My dad gave me his Pentax SLR and I used to take pictures of anything and experiment with filters and things. I remember the first film I took in for developing. I was so excited about the images, but the technician told me the film was all ripped and shredded up. Later, I found out that I'd not pressed the button on the bottom and forced the winder back, ripping all the sprocket holes. This was my first school boy error, but at least I learnt early on.

WHERE DO YOU GET YOUR INSPIRATION FROM?

Usually what's going on around me. One of the biggest inspirations for me is space. I've always been fascinated by it and it seems to be a reoccurring theme in my work.

TOOLS. WHAT DO YOU USE REGULARLY AND WHAT'S YOUR FAVOURITE?

I'm a photographer, but I love getting involved and building things, so my gaffa tape, string, craft knife, card and blue tac are just as important to me as my lenses. I don't geek out too much with cameras, so I can't give you a massive list of accessories and model names. I just stick to a select few. I would say my ball of string is my favourite tool.

WHAT OTHER ARTISTIC MEDIA HAVE HAD AN EFFECT ON YOUR WORK?

I've always loved graphic design, but at school I was told I couldn't hold a pen properly, so I thought it wasn't a career for me. Blending elements of photography and design are now quite common in my work. I also have a big place in my heart for illustration, so being given a chance to work with TADO and exhibiting at Pictoplasma in Berlin was fantastic.

HOW DO YOU SPEND YOUR DAYS?

Most days I don't do too much. I only spend a handful of days in the month working. A lot of time goes into looking and listening to stuff on the web. Standard. Also producing and DJ'ing under the name Baka Baka. People probably know me for being out and about with my camera, doing photos for various club nights like Soup Kitchen, Squelch and Clap and Club Pony.

OUT OF YOUR RECENT WORK, WHICH PIECE HAVE YOU ENJOYED MAKING THE MOST?

Working with Nous Vous on the Tokyo Police Club album cover. I was already a big fan of their work. Not only was the set already built when I arrived, but I got to smash the crap out of it at the end for the back cover of the album. We all had good fun that day.

HOW HAS YOUR WORK EVOLVED OVER TIME?

I used to use Photoshop loads after I finished college and when I was assisting. Most of my work now has a handmade element to it and I try to keep retouching to a minimum, because you see so much digital art it's hard to really appreciate it, even though it's still a craft and some work can look incredible. I started wanting to keep things as real as I can.

WHAT ARE YOU CURRENTLY WORKING ON?

That would be telling and I'm not sure if I'm supposed to, but it's a local job that I'm really proud to be a part of. I'm also going to be making some images for Checan's BWRC mix series.

ANY TIPS ON HOW TO SURVIVE MAKING MONEY FROM YOUR WORK?

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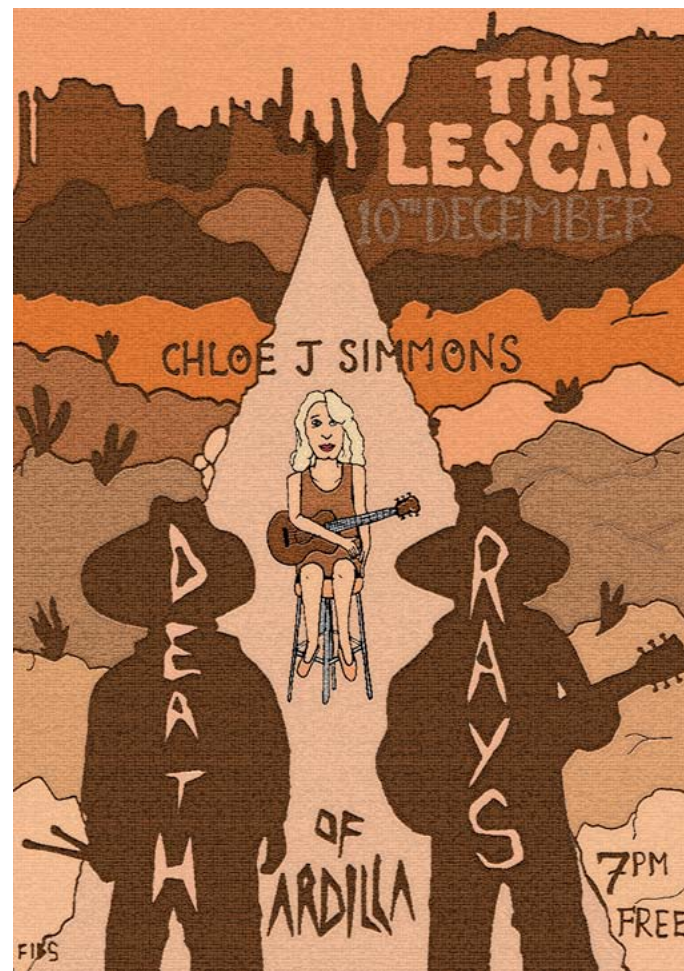
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ANDY BROWN.

Andy has been documenting Sheffield for as long as I've been looking at pictures here, part of the Go 'alumni' responsible for a considerable amount of good shit. Way back in the early annals of Now Then we did a poster of his work '8 Seconds' - an immaculate quick succession of photos of the Tinsley Towers coming down, and it seems only fitting he's back again.

What always grabs me about Andy's work is the amount each image generally has to say. If you can take a portrait and have it capture some of the character of your subject, or a desolate seaside and steal some of its nature perfectly, then that's a good photo. Another great example of a working Sheffield maker - not too proud to turn down commercial work that will pay for the multitude of worthwhile work that fills the rest of his time - but consistent and clever enough to retain his characteristic stamp of class throughout.

BASICS, PLEASE - WHAT STARTED YOU TAKING PHOTOS?

I lived in London for a couple of years about ten years ago. I got given an old SLR and started shooting stuff on the streets - protests, portraits of people and the occasional live band. I just got hooked. When I moved back to Sheffield, Sandman magazine had just started, so I started doing stuff for them. Then GO Sheffo started, and because there were places to put my work and that sort of motivation, I started taking it more and more seriously.

CAN YOU DESCRIBE THE PROCESS OF STARTING A NEW PIECE?

In terms of long projects, it's definitely a case of being a bit flexible, taking your time and seeing what emerges. For example, I'm now doing a project on the residents of Park Hill, and from straight portraits of current residents its broadened to include people who used to be there and left when the blocks started to be emptied, people I only met after the project started. Shooting portraits tends to be about having ideas in mind beforehand.

WHERE DO YOU GET YOUR INSPIRATION FROM?

It's often from seeing the work of amazing photographers and being moved by how they see the world, and can show you their world, which looks different to yours. People like William Eggleston, Alec Soth, Mary Ellen-Mark, Joel Sternfeld... the way they can tell a story and make things look beautiful at the same time.

TOOLS. WHAT DO YOU USE REGULARLY AND WHAT'S YOUR FAVOURITE?

It's all digital for me, out of necessity rather than anything else. In corporate work, you need to be able to turn things round very quickly. I would love to use medium format as well, but on top of the equipment you're talking about a pound every time you press the shutter. I'm happy with digital quality too - the newest cameras are getting close to medium format quality in my opinion, and they're much more flexible.

WHAT OTHER ARTISTIC MEDIA HAVE HAD AN EFFECT ON YOUR WORK?

No other visual art moves me like photography. I love good graphic design, but aside from that I would say music. I often feel that I want my pictures to suit certain music - usually bleak, miserable music, to be honest.

HOW DO YOU SPEND YOUR DAYS?

Like all freelancers, trying to juggle the stuff that pays the bills with ongoing projects and portraits that are the reason I do what I do. Panicking about what the next paying job is. I do a lot of corporate work and weddings. Some photographers are sniffy about them, but I genuinely enjoy the work, so there is a lot of Photoshopping and meeting deadlines, mixed in with actually taking pictures.

OUT OF YOUR RECENT WORK, WHICH PIECE HAVE YOU ENJOYED MAKING THE MOST?

The project I'm working on now, up at Park Hill. There are so many stories mixed in together and it's amazing to get to meet the residents and realise some of them have been there for 40 or 50 years. It's easy to go up there and take pictures of brutalist architecture, but I'm trying to avoid that and tell personal stories. Clive Egginton, a photographer and a friend of mine, is setting up a website called Archive Sheffield, to collect photographic work documenting the city, and I'm looking forward to getting my current project in there.



HOW HAS YOUR WORK EVOLVED OVER TIME?

Another Sheffield photographer, Theo Simpson, once told me that you have to spend years taking bad photos before you start taking good photos, and I agree. Most people have to work through all the clichés at the same time as learning the technical side of it, and then you hopefully start producing stuff you're happy with.

I've pretty much stopped doing live music stuff. There's only so many shots of a guy with a guitar I wanted to take. I realised how much taking good pictures of people relies on your relationship with them. It doesn't necessarily have to be a comfortable relationship - lots of great images have tension in them - but it's the most important thing, I think. I'm still learning.

HOW HAS ART IN GENERAL CHANGED SINCE YOU STARTED?

I'm not sure, but I do know how much competition there is. There are so many photographers out there - lots of great ones and hundreds of bad ones. You need to keep moving, keep shooting, keep plugging away.

WHAT ARE YOU CURRENTLY WORKING ON?

As well as Park Hill, I've got a thing about out of season coastal towns, so I will be cracking on with some more of that this winter, and I've got an exciting documentary project based in Sheffield coming up in the New Year too.

ANY TIPS ON HOW TO SURVIVE MAKING MONEY FROM YOUR WORK?

It's about being professional, being willing to do all sorts of different work and keeping up with personal projects, keeping people informed of new work.

WHAT DO YOU DISLIKE IN ART?

I suppose photos that don't move me - work without a good point or theory behind it, or technically bad work. And people who tell you how great they are!

WHAT MAKES YOU SMILE IN ART?

Great ideas. Being creative on no money. People who plug away at stuff because they care about it.

GOOD ADVICE YOU WISH YOU'D BEEN TOLD EARLIER?

Look at as much good photography as you can. The Magnum website and a blog called Conscientious are good places to start.

Don't expect everyone to get what you're trying to do. Try and learn from photographers whose work you admire.

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SOUND.

WHITE MEN CAN'T CRUNK.

JACK SCOURFIELD.

I recently had the rare, once-in-a-lifetime pleasure of overhearing a middle-aged man conversing with his companion in a pub about R&B. “Did you know that, these days, ‘R&B’ doesn’t mean Eric Clapton? Apparently those Black Eyed Peas are R&B now. And that Kanye whatsit. Yes, he’s R&B now as well”. If his drinking buddy had been mid-sip when this bombshell was dropped, I have no doubt he would’ve produced a violent, outraged spray that any early ‘90s American sitcom would’ve been proud of, such was his obvious disbelief. When he’d eventually picked his jaw back up off the floor and popped his bulging eyes back in to their sockets, he proceeded to excoriate the modern world for its slip in musical genre-classification standards.

Despite what these two barflies would no doubt prefer, R&B in the contemporary music realm is - as a popular web-based information service tells us - ‘a term often used to describe a style of African American music originating after the demise of disco in the 1980s’. Artists such as Michael Jackson, Kanye West, Kelis, Usher, and, erm, Jason DeRulo have kept charts and clubs buzzing with their various brands of R&B over the years, and you’d be a shoe-in for the coveted ‘Understatement of the Year’ award if you were to say the genre is easily one of the most widely popular in the world. But if you were to cast your gaze over certain areas of the music world recently, you’d think that R&B was the brainchild of some scrawny, sweeping-fringed white guy.

One such scrawny, sweeping-fringed cracker is Robin Carolan, who has launched a club night in London called So Bones that is ‘devoted to cutting edge commercial R&B and hip hop’. Now, don’t get me wrong - Robin Carolan has done plenty of good in his life. He contributes to the influential 20 Jazz Funk Greats blog and set up the Tri Angle label, which has released some of the best music of 2010. However, you’ve got to question the wisdom of a man who feels there aren’t enough club nights devoted to R&B and hip hop in London. There are definitely more than enough. So what’s the logic behind So Bones? Could it be that, while those associated with the night - residents include Romy from The xx and post-dubsteppers Deadboy and Girl Unit - undoubtedly have a genuine love for R&B, they are just too, y’know, white and middle-class to actually attend the regular R&B nights? While I’m sure that these crunk-fans do enjoy listening to a bit of Cassie and Brandy on their iPods while strolling through Shoreditch of an afternoon, it’s harder to picture them bumping and grinding alongside Brixton’s finest on a Friday night. Is this just a bid by the nation’s hipster honkies to wrestle control of a traditionally black genre from the clutches of its long-standing mainstream fan base?

It’s already happened elsewhere this year. Chicago juke, a style of music similar to ghetto house with BPMs generally sitting around the 150-160 mark, has existed in the Windy City for over a decade now. Notable for the ‘footwork’ dancing deployed by revellers at juke nights, it remained very much an insular Chicago phenomenon up until this year, when it suddenly become the genre du jour. Planet Mu seized upon it and have released material from Chicago juke artists DJ Roc, DJ Nate and DJ Rashad. Kingpins of the scene DJ Spinn and Murderbot have been invited over to tour the UK, including a date at The Harley, and the juke influence has crept into the work of British producers such as Ramadanman. While many who like to think of themselves as musically clued-up have hopped on to the ever-accelerating juke bandwagon in Britain, it’s hard to imagine that over in Chicago they’re all now footworking along to Ramadanman and Headhunter’s juke alter-ego, Addison Groove.

Of course, the world would be a sorry place if people felt any limit to the kind of music they are able to listen to. Ramadanman has been in the form of his life this year, partly due to that juke influence. The ‘witch house’ genre - combining half-speed pop and hip-hop with ambient drone and pioneered by, among others, Robin Carolan’s Tri Angle label - has provided some of the most innovative musical moments of 2010, including Salem’s King Night LP, which features pitch-shifted rapping by the lead singer to make himself sound black. But it’s still hard not to see the So Bones crew’s intrusion into R&B as somewhat like the Brazilian gang that tried to carjack Jensen Button and his F1 posse, attempting to steal a vehicle away from people who have vastly better experience of it, and always will do. Wouldn’t it be better if Jensen had been driving a Nissan Juke?





BROKEN RECORDS/ LAURA J. MARTIN.

3RD NOVEMBER.
THE HARLEY.

REVIEWER – BEN ECKERSLEY.

Whisky, mountains, Irn Bru, haggis, bagpipes, oatcakes, battered Mars bars... I'm a huge fan of anything Scottish. I also love Arcade Fire. So when I saw that Broken Records, a band oft described as the Scottish Arcade Fire, were playing at the Harley, I wasn't going to miss it. But first up was Laura J. Martin.

Laura is an impressive multi-instrumentalist and solo artist who combined live looped flute, mandolin, melodica and even at one point mbira (an African thumb piano) with pre-recorded, homemade beats and basslines to create a genuinely unique sound. To call her a virtuoso isn't quite superlative enough – if she wasn't making her own music, I wouldn't be surprised to see her playing 1st flute in the Hallé. Using a variety of special effects - overtones, multiphonics, vocal noises and so on - she built up huge, complex walls of sounds combined with heavy Diplo-esque beats. It's easy to hear the influence of Kidkanevil, with whom she regularly performs.

There's a marked contrast between these tunes and her folkier numbers led from the mandolin, which have a very gentle sound, creating an intimate atmosphere. I can't think of another time I've ever seen people sitting on the floor of the Harley. With such a range of noises and styles, it's staggering that there was only one person on stage. She finished with a cover of 'Tease Me' by Chaka Demus & Pliers, which was the perfect end to an exceptional performance.

And so to Broken Records. I can only suspect that the Arcade Fire epithet is something of a noose around their necks. However, with a wide range of instruments (which they gladly swapped between themselves as the evening progressed), expansive song structures and epic qualities to their music, the similarities are clear. The influence of Scottish music is very present too; while they don't quite start playing jigs and reels, the violinist in the band adds a beautiful counterpoint to the vocal melodies.

They are clearly a band constantly trying to push beyond the limitations of a standard indie set up. They regularly experiment with time signatures, break away from typical musical structures and use their instruments with great subtlety, the two lead guitarists creating an aura of sound binding the rest of the group together and driving the music forwards. The overall product is not entirely new. I have heard precedents for most of their experiments, but it's gratifying to hear a group challenging themselves to combine the very best of what they hear around them.

One of their real strengths is their approachability, both as people, in their interactions with the audience between songs, and also musically. Many post rock groups, though brilliantly imaginative in their scope, can wind up creating artificial barriers by being almost too obtuse. Broken Records, meanwhile, play music that draws the listener in and there is enough strength in their song writing to inspire their audience. I had a chat with them afterwards, and they were ever so nice too. Great band.

CHROME HOOF.

29TH OCTOBER.
THE WARDROBE, LEEDS.

REVIEWER – GORDON BARKER.

Having only played festivals since the release of their new **Crush Depth** LP, Chrome Hoof announced a small series of city dates. Since discovery, this group - formed by UK doom revitalizers Cathedral's bassist Leo Smee and brother Milo - have grown in all directions. Starting as a bass and drum duo keen to show their love of 70s funk and disco, the pair recruited members from all around the country, from harpists to full horn and string sections, growing into the prog/disco/doom/electronic arkestra they are today. Always changing their live line up depending on the setting, I was genuinely excited (my friend definitely bore the brunt of my eagerness) to see this expansive and eclectic act on a small stage.

But firstly, the venue has to be checked out. Upstairs is a lovely, warm, open plan bar and the club space downstairs is a perfectly laid out, velveteen red and black den, a very close and personal space. Getting to wander around the equipment beforehand, this was definitely the best backdrop for the show to come.

After a long wait and the slow realisation that there was definitely not going to be a support act, we remained blissfully unaware that the stage was filling with smoke until it licked round our feet, bringing us to look up and see two cloaked (silver sequined!) figures approaching. Reaching their positions, the synth and drums began to build as the rest of the group emerged, donning the same cosmic outfits, Lola Olafisoye taking front and centre in a silver jump suit, before breaking into their first song.

Instantly grabbing attention, they play through the first three tracks with ut any kind of drop in energy. After this initial burst, a "break" was needed. The crowd, although smaller than they deserved, were buzzing from the entrance and all ears were wide open for some instrumental virtuosity. A chance to stand back and realise what was going on was a gift, looking up to see a multitude of instruments, eight people, most with more than one at their disposal - my favourite being the trumpet player, who stops to let out powerful screams. Hearing someone across the room shouting to their friend "they've got a bloody oboe" definitely put this into context.

Ever building from there, the show increases in intensity, the violinist and guitarist edging closer and closer to the crowd staring with Abbath intensity into individuals' eyes, only stopping to face each other for some theatrical musical sparring.

There is no stopping during this show - no introductions, no communication between artist and audience. It is pure theatrics, overwhelmingly skilled and undeniably profound. There is never a dull moment, and I believe if they acted any differently that effect would have been spoiled. An experience to be sought out by all and aspired to by all live artists.

JEHST, MICALL PARKNSUN & KLASHNEKOFF.

HARLEY.
4TH NOVEMBER.

REVIEWER - TOMMY BLANK.

"Hip-hop's been dead for years. We all should know that, come on." - Nas

With the American pioneers of the genre now well and truly forgotten (try dropping Funky 4 + 1 or Grandmaster Flash into conversation) and the kids who made it look good appearing on Katy Perry tracks (hang your head in shame Long Beach's lanky canine), it's easy to see the point Nas was trying to make.

But the UK scene has always had a different approach to rap. Firstly, the majority of UK hip hop heads are skinny white boys who would look more at home at a Libertines gig than in the back of a bouncing low-rider in a Death Row video. The other, more noteworthy thing you'll notice is a propensity for the few commercial successes of the UK rap game to disappear into other genres. Recently the tendency has been for British MCs to be nudged awkwardly into the ugly love-child of dance and pop that has ill-advisedly been dubbed 'electro', leaving the likes of Task Force and Jehst well alone. UK rap artists just aren't as palatable for the pop industry as their American forefathers, and for that I'm thankful.

The Harley was rammed to the rafters for this affair, and at eight quid a pop it proved that a killer line-up will shift tickets. Klashnekoff warmed up the crowd with his frustrating inability to get more than a minute into a track without skipping to the next one, like a roomful of restless nine year olds on a karaoke Xbox game. With tight verses and a knack for crowd pleasing, he had the crowd's fingers in the air mimicking AK's and spitting his lyrics right back at him.

Jehst hit the stage with YNR labelmates Micall Parknsun and DJ Jazz-T and, no two ways about it, categorically killed it. He performed a justifiable amount of new tracks that were lapped up with the enthusiasm of a cattery jailbreak upon finding a spilt Friji milkshake. Comfortingly, his old material sounded as fresh in 2010 as it did ten years ago.

Jazz-T is a formidable DJ, and even in the company of one of the most respected MCs in the country, he looked too cool to be there. But all eyes were on the main event as he wine and dined the crowd with his back catalogue and kept heads nodding throughout.

It was sweaty elbows in your face, hands in the air, Red Stripe down your jeans, raw lyrical satisfaction.

And Sheffield, it's been a fucking while.

Since the recent arrival, sorry assault of dubstep on the Sheffield music scene, you really have to seek out rap these days. And despite the superlative work of local boys like Bad Taste Records (see interview on page 52), it's getting harder and harder to call yourself a hip hop fan when it's becoming as obscure a genre as shoegaze.

But one thing both Jehst and Bad Taste are doing is filling out intimate venues with the right kind of line-ups, the right crowds and the real shit when it comes down to two or three lads with a microphone and a DJ.

And if that's where hip hop lives from now on, count me in.

SOUP KITCHEN.

DIRTY LITTLE SECRET.
13TH NOVEMBER.

REVIEWER – BEN DOREY.

As some of Sheffield's most sporadic and stealthy promoters, the guys at Soup Kitchen managed to create a huge buzz around their most recent night. Other well-known nights in the city were eerily empty on Friday night, with people choosing to stay in in anticipation of a large one on Saturday. Soup Kitchen didn't fail to deliver, with a standardly ahead of the curve line-up of garage, dubstep, grime and bassline at Dirty Little Secret, Sheffield's latest licenced underground venue.

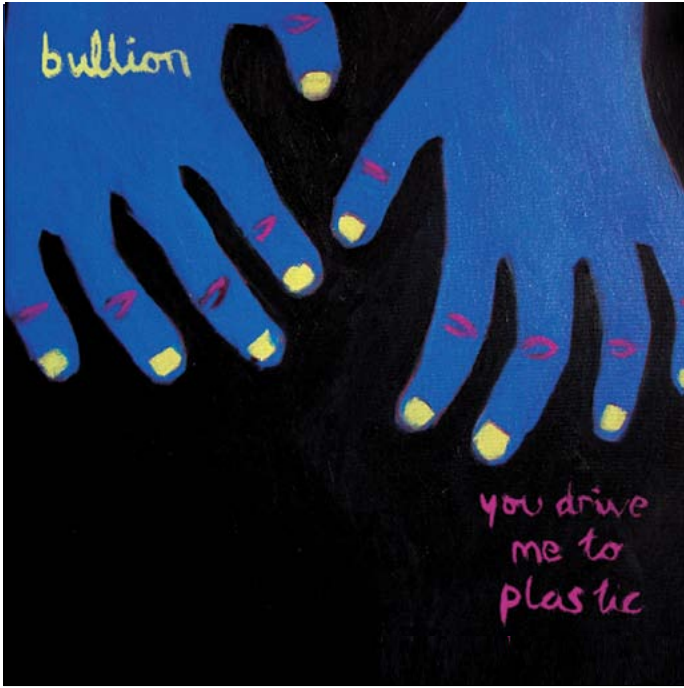
Unfortunately, due to some miscommunication between the venue owners and promoters, the event was oversold. This, alongside the hype surrounding the event and the lure of possible tickets on the door, led to a bit of a mess at the entrance and a number of people being turned away. This meant I missed the first part of the night, but once arms were twisted and we were in, we were presented with real quality all night, both from the DJs and the fantastic Dangernoise Audio rig that powered affairs.

Enough digression. First of the headliners was XXXY, Manchester's Mindset Recording's up and coming star. His own tunes thoughtfully meld together aspects of the spacey dubstep you associate with his label with warm synth textures and galloping two step rhythms. His set merged self-produced output with selections that reflected both his influences and a staggering breadth of knowledge within those genres, resulting in an hour and a half of music that was never obvious but nonetheless worked wonders on the dancefloor.

Next up was Merseyside wunderkinden Mele. The boy may only just be old enough to get into clubs, but somehow already has the ability to tear them up and at Soup Kitchen things were no different. With almost superhuman skills in turning tunes round fast, he immediately launched into 90 minutes of non-stop mash-uppery, spanning everything from 90s garage to grime and retro pop classics. I'm not going to say I enjoyed every minute - some of the selections were a little abrasive to my ears - but a sizeable crowd on the dancefloor evidently did, and thanks to the aforementioned skills in turning tunes over lightning fast it wasn't often that I had to endure more than a couple of minutes I didn't rate.

Dark Sky took things into the not-so-early hours with an intelligent if slightly too of the moment selection of bass music. There was a lot of good synth driven garage, which is becoming almost a prerequisite in 2010, but also moments when the dirtier corners of dubstep were explored thoroughly for the first time in the evening, providing a welcome change in atmosphere. All this was delivered smoothly and without too much fuss, perhaps aided by the fact that Soup Kitchen had decided against having MCs, who are often all too culpable for sets full of rewinds and replays.

Resident Jack Opus rounded things off nicely with a genre-splicing set that included some cheeky nuggets of bassline to keep us locals happy. Smashing stuff. Soup Kitchen will no doubt now drop below the radar for a while again, but keep your ears pricked for when they return because, even without complications, I imagine the demand for soup will outstrip the supply in the New Year.



BULLION.

YOU DRIVE ME TO PLASTIC.
YOUNG TURKS.

REVIEWER – TOM BELSHAW.

Of all the things to happen to me in 2008 - finally getting a haircut, meeting the first in a new line of god awful women and completely missing out on the fact it was the International Year of the Potato - I would have to say stumbling upon the sounds of Bullion somewhere in the annals of the blogosphere was my crowning moment. It took all of twenty minutes to ravage the servers of his entire, modest back catalogue and all of 24 hours to ensure everyone I knew suitably revered the brilliant **Pet Sounds in the Key of Dee** album.

Just shy of a year later the grapevine let slip news of a certain Nathan 'Bullion' Jenkins being booked to play round these here parts. So I gathered my friends and skipped my way to the discotheque with the full intention of meeting and befriendng a West Londoner with a penchant for dopeness. Instead, I took it upon myself to get somewhat intoxicated and, with a can of Red Stripe in each hand, inquire as to which synth he used on breakout track 'Get Familiar'. Face palm.

Another year has passed and with it comes the advent of Bullion's self proclaimed non-album, **You Drive Me to Plastic**. To say the LP is somewhat of a departure from his beats of yore seems a heady understatement. It has arrived, unpacked and staked claim to the best seat at the pool bar. Warped, droning saxophones and echoing Farfisa claps litter the soundscapes. Where once stood warm, punchy beats now leer cold, eighties snaps. Layers of deep, lush samples have found their replacement in jarring, Juno-like swells. Most importantly though, head nods and foot taps have been replaced by beard strokes and irony.

'Spirit Mighty' and 'My Castle In England' sound like masterfully EQ'd versions of Tears For Fears' instrumental noodlings from **Songs From The Big Chair**. The fourth offering 'Lol Express' bears a striking resemblance to 'Desire' by oddball eighties pop group Yello. 'Pressure to Dance' plays like a sloppy Cybotron b-side circa 1985. All tracks seem to retain as much pretension as their counterparts of yesteryear.

I've always believed music should be the last bastion of taste. There's enough irony in moustaches, jumpers and voting habits without the need for sardonic tunes, and nothing irks my nostalgia more than plagiarising a time of hairspray and expensive coal. However - and do bear with me on this - it could be we are witnessing a concept career, each LP representing an alternative take on a predetermined decade. We've had concept albums like **...And the Purple Brain** by One Handed Music's jewel in the crown, Paul White. Maybe Bullion is thinking on a much wider scale. Not content with one twee foray into conceptual indulgence, he's deemed himself fit to accept a career of scrutiny outside of his select peers and nepotism within.

Or maybe he just got tired of people telling him he bears a striking similarity to J Dilla. Yes, I said that to him as well.



MAX COOPER

EXPRESSIONS.
TRAUM.

REVIEWER – FRED OXBY.

Max Cooper divides his time between his day job as a theoretical geneticist and producing minimal techno. I first became aware of his music through his mindboggling tune 'Chaotish Serie' on the highly successful Traum imprint earlier this year. Like fellow Brit Nathan Fake, Cooper enjoys the slightly kookier side of the techno spectrum, and in light of Fake's recent hiatus from releases, it seems that Cooper's time in the limelight might well be just beginning.

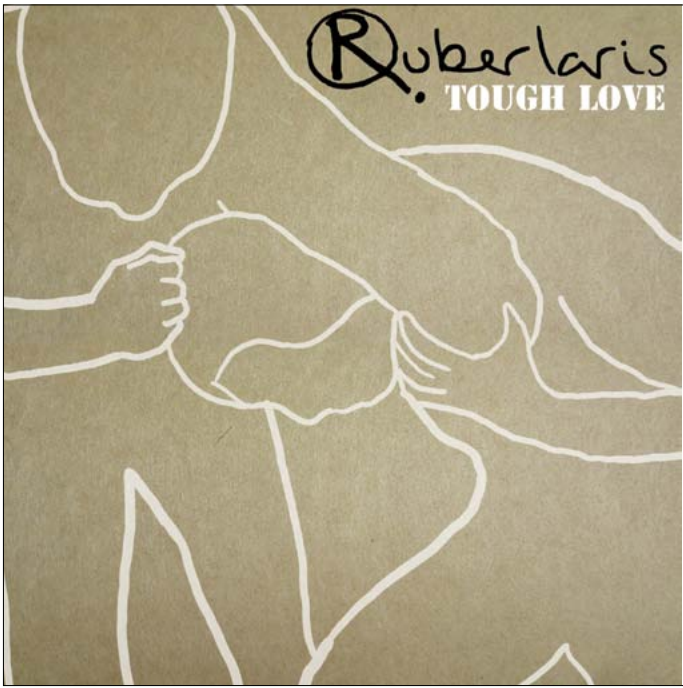
The release opens with 'Ripple', a pensive and gradually developing piece of minimal techno which gently evolves over seven minutes. It epitomises what I find satisfying about Cooper's production style; warm analogue synths drifting in and out of focus on top of a skilfully crafted rhythm track. There are no pretensions - just wonderful musical images flowing in and around each other. You have to wait five minutes for the main melody but it's worth the wait in every respect.

The strongest track on the release comes in the form of 'Enveloped', an inspiring piece that will please fans of ambient and down-tempo music alike. It opens with a subtle synth that rises until it gives way to a soft dubstep-inspired beat. Then comes a soaring pad which guides the listener into and beyond the second breakdown. It's a masterclass in sparse composition and draws a line in the sand between Cooper's work and the more electro-inspired sounds that Minus and other stalwarts of the minimal scene are seemingly obsessed with right now.

The weakest track on this release by quite a stretch is the third, a remix of 'Chaotish Serie' by Maetrik. I was blown away by the depth and creativity of the original mix, but this incarnation sees the track remixed into a tech house number which fails to develop, improve or elaborate on Cooper's version. It's not a bad track in terms of production, but really falls behind in comparison to the other elements of this release.

Finally, we come to 'Sea of Sound', a slow ambient tune with a subtle four to the floor beat. It returns the listener to the hypnotic feel of the first two tracks with its analogue swells and epic breakdowns. No standout track, but a fitting end to a pleasant listening experience nonetheless.

What is striking about Max Cooper's style is that it stands apart from the typical dancefloor-oriented sound of mainstream techno by leaning towards a more organic aesthetic. It is closer to electronica than techno in many ways, favouring intricate soundscapes over heavy bass and pounding rhythms. It's a welcome change, and one that will ring true among fans of Nathan Fake, The Field and Four Tet.



RUBERLARIS

TOUGH LOVE EP.
SELF-RELEASED.

REVIEWER – SAM WALBY.

Ruberlaris are a five-piece hailing from just over the county border. The Chesterfield group's first proper recording comes off the back of a number of high-profile gigs up north and elsewhere, and was recorded at 2Fly Studios in Sheffield by Alan Smyth. **Tough Love** features four high-energy tracks that take cues from two-tone ska, indie and pop, mixing the three in differing ratios for a distinctly northern blend.

The title track boasts some of the catchiest material here. The rolling drums and percussion create a marching verse with a swaggering skank and an infectious, held-chord refrain. At two minutes and 20 seconds, it is a good intro track and keeps you coming back for more. Similarly short but sweet is the (presumably) autobiographical 'J.S.A', the story of a chap on the dole who wants a fully-fledged job in music, only to be told "sorry son, there's nowt we can do / that's not a realistic job for you". Whoever said Jobseeker's Allowance is the musician's wage?

'Another Broken Man' takes us into more downtempo territory, with a thoughtful guitar line and contemplative lyrics musing on loneliness. Despite its intrigue and bouncy 3/4 time, this is probably the least interesting of the four.

Tough Love concludes with 'Let It All Out', taking us back into straight-up ska for one final thrash. Using pop sensibilities, a meandering bassline and vocals from all parties in the chorus, it is a fitting end to a no-nonsense EP. The sax playing is particularly effective in creating a summery tone to counterpoint the lyrical content and, as the vocals draw to a close abruptly, the whole EP clocks in at just over ten minutes.

While this is not the most ambitious of recordings and it doesn't really do justice to the youthful energy of these five local lads, it could be the foundation of something much larger. There are real echoes of Sheffield ska greats Bison, but the angle is slightly different, not least due to an Alex Turner-esque cheekiness on the part of vocalist and songwriter Chris Alsop. And to think, I nearly got through this review without a reference to the Arctic Monkeys...

Ruberlaris launch Tough Love at the Plug on 18th December.



HORSEPOWER PRODUCTIONS

THE QUEST FOR THE SONIC BOUNTY.
TEMPA.

REVIEWER – DAVE ANGEL.

It's always a strange one when reviewing an album that you have been looking forward to when it turns out to be, well, disappointing.

Horsepower Productions have been releasing music on Tempa for many years and in fact were responsible for the creation of Tempa001 back in 2000. In the ten years since, their influence has been wide-ranging, with their music being cited as "the biggest influence in my early production days" by Skream. Mary Anne Hobbs has also been quoted saying: "The bottom line is this; there would be no dubstep. Not even one bar, let alone Top 10 Hits, without Horsepower..."

Previous albums have gained Horsepower Productions high praise to the point that, alongside El-B and Zed Bias, they have been credited with the creation of the dubstep genre. 2002's **In Fine Style** still sounds great today, with highlights being 'Fat Larry's Skank' and 'Rude Boyz'.

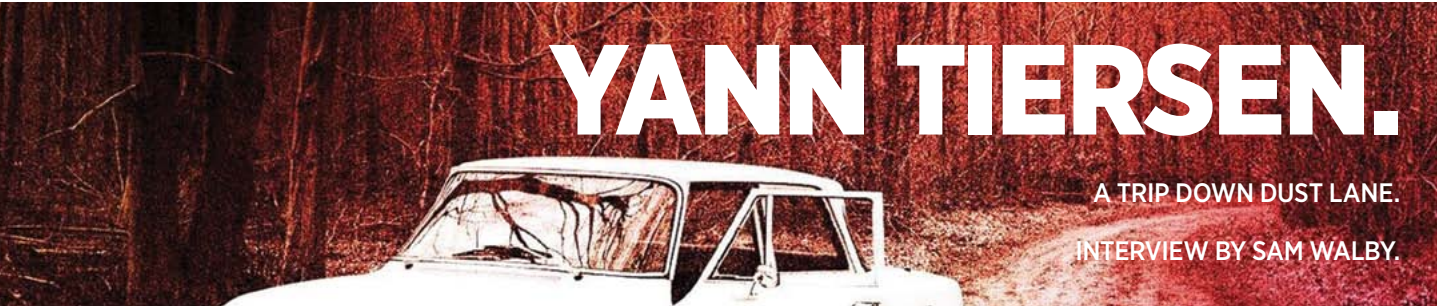
However, I don't feel that the most recent offering in the form of **The Quest For The Sonic Bounty**, Horsepower's third album, will stand the test of time. Many of its ideas have been explored by others on the same label in recent years, and in my opinion people like Headhunter do a much more interesting job of it.

Of course, there are still some great moments, with high production levels and well-cut film dialog samples, but these points are rendered invalid by limited groove interest and heavy repetition of loops containing average music which lacks enough apparent modulation to keep the listener interested.

Much of the joy of The Quest For The Sonic Bounty is to be found in the subtleties, but I don't feel there is enough direction in any of the tracks to make me go in search of more or to keep me coming back to this album.



Sheffield portraiture by Andy Brown - envioustime.co.uk



Yann Tiersen (not to be confused with either of the old blokes on the left) is not the most French name in the world, but since the release of **Amélie** in 2001 it has been a household name across the Channel. Because lurking behind Jean-Pierre Jeunet's international cinematic success was an exemplary soundtrack penned by M. Tiersen, a notably French score that belies the writer's Belgian and Norwegian family background.

His newer creations have made space for electric guitar and synths (previously overshadowed by piano, violin and accordion), giving him a wider palette to draw from. **Dust Lane** hit shelves in October following Tiersen's signing with Mute, and the man has been over here touring the new material. I spoke to him about his new direction (sorry, "evolution"), writing for film and life on an independent label.

What were the inspirations and themes for the new record?

There were no particular inspirations, but it was a long process. My previous tour ended up lasting ages and I got the idea to record a non-instrumental album with vocals on every track. While working on it, I was mostly focusing on choirs, backing vocals and harmony, instead of lead vocals. It was more like instrumental tracks with vocals added.

What brought you to the more vintage sound of the album?

I've always been a huge fan of vintage synths. I don't know why I'd never used one on record, but after a day in the studio recording Dust Lane I was playing around with them, trying to find new sounds. Naturally, those sounds crept into the final product and instruments like the mellotron are quite important to the overall sound of the album.

What prompted your move to more electronic sounds?

There were some electronic elements on the previous album, but more old-fashioned, like the ondes Martenot. For me, it's not really a new direction but more of an evolution. I like the idea of slowly exploring new sounds and integrating them.

Have you felt limited by electronic instruments at all?

No, because I think each synth should be treated like a traditional instrument with its own personality and character.

You've been adapting older tracks for the new tour as well, haven't you?

I've always done that, because I hate when musicians play songs exactly as they are on the album. I think if you do that there isn't much point in doing gigs. The songs are finished when a record is done, so the stage is an opportunity to bring them alive again with new ideas and alternate arrangements.

Do you do that even on tracks from the new album?

Not every gig, of course, but yeah. Particularly if we have a break during a tour, we always add new bits and create different versions.

What is your earliest musical memory?

I think my first memory of music was a performance in Brittany. I don't know what, but some time in the 70s. I just remember bright lights and being really impressed. It was a bit strange.

You have quite a classical music background...

No, that's not true. It's true in a way, but I only went to music school from the age of six to 12. I quit after that. So I have been playing since I was young...

So you see it more as having taught yourself?

Yeah, I think so. The idea I have a classical background is completely wrong. A lot of people in France go to music school when they are young. What had more of an effect was growing up in Rennes in Brittany and going to the annual Trans Musicales festival, because I had the opportunity to see a lot of bands. That was always much more important for me than studying music.

You are probably best known in the UK for writing the Amélie soundtrack. Did you keep the narrative of the film in mind when scoring the music?

No, because most of it is excerpts from my first albums. I'm really bad at writing pieces specifically for soundtracks. I don't think my style of making music fits with film.

How does it differ from making a normal album?

The only real limitation is the length of a track, but I don't work any differently. It's very abstract. It's just sounds, and sounds mean nothing. You can't express something that you interpret from a screen. It's pointless because it's not a language, so you can't articulate something specific. That mystery is what is beautiful about music.

Do you have any plans to do more soundtracks in the future?

Maybe or maybe not. I don't know...[laughs]

How do you approach composition? Is it different every time or do you have a method?

It's very simple and instinctive. I find ideas on the guitar and press record. Then I create overdubs and see what happens. I never compose on the violin. Once in 15 years, I think. Piano is so complex that I sometimes don't feel free playing it, so I never really compose on the piano either.

Which contemporary musicians do you draw most inspiration from?

I really like Animal Collective, Battles, These New Puritans, Low.

Would you like to work with any of those artists?

I believe in human relationships, and I don't think you can have a plan to work with someone if you don't know him or her personally. Sometimes you recognise something personal in someone's music and you think that maybe you have something to share, but that is really an illusion.

Does working with a band change the way you perform live?

Working alone and working with other people are two completely different things. I like to be in the studio alone and discover new ideas, but working with a band is the opposite of that, really.

Did you write the whole album? Or did you adapt your original pieces with contributions from the band?

No, I did everything by myself, apart from the choirs (obviously) and drums.

This is your first album on Mute. How did you end up signed with them?

I finished Dust Lane over a year ago now - not last summer but the summer before - and I was searching for a new label with people I could trust and talk to about music. I spent quite a lot of time looking, and Mute was the first and last I came to. I'm really a big fan of the label, so it's great to be signed with them.

Is it important for you to be working with smaller, independently-minded people like that?

Of course. Most of the time, working with major companies is a waste of time and money. I started with a small label before I signed with the Labels imprint, who were part of Virgin but had quite an indie approach, like Mute at the time. After a while they became more and more a part of EMI, so I ended up with EMI France and it was really bad. Not because of the people, but because they had too much work to do, which for me is the problem with major labels; too much of a business.

What importance do you place on touring?

I've always toured a lot and I really enjoy it. Recording an album is exciting but it is a lot of work. I quite like the rhythm of staying at home for two years to write an album, then taking it on tour to bring it to life. For me it's a bit like a holiday.

So you don't feel a pressure to tour in order to put food on the table?

Not at all. Last year I did almost 100 gigs. I love it.



BAD TASTE.

DIY WELL DONE.

This month, we take some time out to chat to local label and promotions team Bad Taste Records about their adventures in Sheffield.

How did Bad Taste get started and who/what were your early inspirations?

Bad Taste Records was started by Darkstorm and Trellion in late 2008. We just wanted to create a label that would output the music that we and our peers were making whilst also putting on underground DJ and live hip hop nights. We're completely DIY, but we try to do things to the best quality possible. We love hip hop and we love dirty bass orientated music, so we thought the name suited the label, as we're not pigeon holed to one genre and essentially what we dig isn't the most popular or accessible music. We're inspired by everything from Wu-Tang Clan to Boards of Canada. In terms of record labels; Stones Throw, Fat Beats, YNR Productions, Warp Records, Planet Mu...

What have been your best and worst promoting experiences?

The best were probably when we put on Stagga & Squire of Gothos at the Harley and also our Tramlines party at Sawa bar. Both nights were roadblock and had the best vibes, although the Terror Danjah and Kanji Kinetic nights weren't too far behind...

Our worst promoting experiences were probably the last couple of nights we did at Ethiocubana before they closed down, because people got sick of the venue and stopped coming. One night we literally had eight people through the door! Grim.

What is unique about music in Sheffield?

There are a lot of amazing producers and musicians who are very down to earth and level-headed. We also have quite a few modest cult heroes like Oris Jay and 65Daysofstatic. Plus with a free festival like Tramlines now a yearly event, the Sheffield music scene will surely thrive.

Do you have any advice for other people putting on their own events?

Try and do something different. Sheffield's a small place and if there are four nights a month that have virtually the same DJs and genres it all becomes saturated. Save the cash you make from your early events so that you can progress and book bigger out of town acts, especially if they've never played Sheffield before, because it makes the scene more exciting and will attract more punters.

Which Sheffield acts should our readers look out for?

Apart from our artists *cough cough*, we highly recommend Dankle, K.I.D.L.I.B, Jack Opus and Baka Baka. Also check out Off Me Nut Records, R8 Records and Bedroom Gully. We'd also like to big up ALL Sheffield acts on their grind in general...on this ting!

Do you have any nights coming up in December?

No, but we have a big night planned for early 2011 so watch this space.

badtasterecords.co.uk
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WHAT'S ON.

DECEMBER LISTINGS.

December can be a bit dry for gigs, but fear not, because we have a succinct list of the best for you.

FroZac Sheffield Live Fundraiser.

@ Penelope's.
3rd December.
£4 adv, £5 otd.
Fundraiser for the much-loved community radio station featuring Maybe Myrtle Tyrtle, the Mother Folkers and various DJs.

Wordlife.

@ Cafe Euro.
4th December.
£3.50
Live spoken word antics and music from Steve Larkin, Alabaster Deplume, Helen Mort, Sarah Thomasin and more.

Godspeed You! Black Emperor.

@ Manchester Academy.
7th December.
£22.50 adv (will sell out).
If you like your rock music dark, cinematic and epic in proportions, this one's for you. Ebay it if need be.

Rangda & Emeralds.

@ Brudenell Social Club, Leeds.
8th December.
£7 adv (wegottickets.com)
If you didn't get enough the night before, Godspeed curate a gig with Belle & Sebastian ahead of the Christmas ATP Festival.

Sheffield Techno Institute #3.

@ Red House.
10th December.
£3, £2 before 10pm.
Third instalment of the already-popular monthly techno outing, with sets from Trific, Jack Orion and residents.

A Taste of Eden.

@ Yellow Arch Studios.
11th December.
£6.
Benefit gig for Scotland's Eden Festival, with live performances from Skayaman, Jungle Lion and Mantra Rhythms.

M-Code NYE Party.

@ 230 Wordbourn Road.
31st December.
£12 adv, £15 otd.
New Year's bash featuring 20Hz, Mad Hatters Family, Dubcentral, Dark Crystal and Feedback.

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TOBY JEPSON
+ SUPPORT
SUN 5TH DEC - £12 ADV - 7PM *
DANNY VAUGHN
+ INVISIBLE IDOLS
MON 6TH DEC - £8 ADV - 7PM *#
SONIC SYNDICATE
+ BLOWSIGHT
THU 9TH DEC - £12.50 ADV - 7PM *
HATEBREED
+ RISE TO REMAIN
FRI 10TH DEC - £6 ADV - 7PM *#
NORTHERN OAK
+ OLD CORPSE ROAD
+ SECRETS OF THE BOUDOIR
BURLESQUE
FRI 10TH DEC - £10 ADV - 7PM *#
STEVE CONTE
+ MELODRAMA
+ LIBERTY SLAVES
SAT 11TH DEC - £12 ADV - 7PM *#
ROTERSAND
+ STRAFTANZ
+ THE LADDER
SUN 12TH DEC - £13 ADV - 7PM *
GALLOWS
+ ROLO TOMASSI
+ NEVER CRY WOLF
MON 13TH DEC - £6 ADV - 7PM *#
STONE RUN
+ VOLUME ZERO
+ BRENDAN DOONEY
THU 16TH DEC - £14 ADV - 7PM * - 18+
CAPTAIN SENSIBLE / THE GLITTER BAND
(XMAS DOUBLE HEADLINER)

FRI 17TH DEC - £6 ADV - 7PM *#
PANIC CELL
+ LONG DAY FEAR
SAT 18TH DEC - £12.50 ADV - 7PM *#
THE GINGER WILDHEART BAND
+ SUPPORT
MON 20TH DEC - £6 ADV - 6.30PM *#
THE ROOKIE LEAGUE (EP LAUNCH)
+ HEY! ALASKA
+ 8TH TIME LUCKIE
+ WE DONT DANCE TO LOVE SONGS
+ UNDER THE INFLUENCE
+ FROM THE GET GO
TUE 21ST DEC - £5 ADV - 7PM *
FLIGHT 815
+ VELOCITY
+ JAX COLON
+ GENTLEMAN AMONG THIEVES
FRI 4TH FEB - £12 ADV - 7PM *#
NACHTMAHR
+ UBERBYTE
+ KOMMAND & KONTROL
SAT 5TH FEB - £15 ADV - 7PM *#
MURDERDOLLS
+ BLACK VEIL BRIDES

COMING SOON

06/02 - PERIPHERY
10/02 - KNIGHTS OF THE ABYSS
11/02 - DEVIL SOLD HIS SOUL
24/02 - METAL HAMMER RAZOR TOUR
26/02 - REEL BIG FISH
19/03 - SONATA ARCTICA
31/03 - GLAMOUR OF THE KILL
15/04 - RUFIO / ALLISTER
20/04 - MAGNUM

XMAS & NEW YEAR OPENING

20/12 - XMAS ODDBALL
22/12 - XMAS SKOOL DISCO
23/12 - XMAS GLITCH
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29/12 - NEW YEARS SKOOL DISCO
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THEATRE.

THE SIGNALMAN AND OTHER GHOST STORIES.

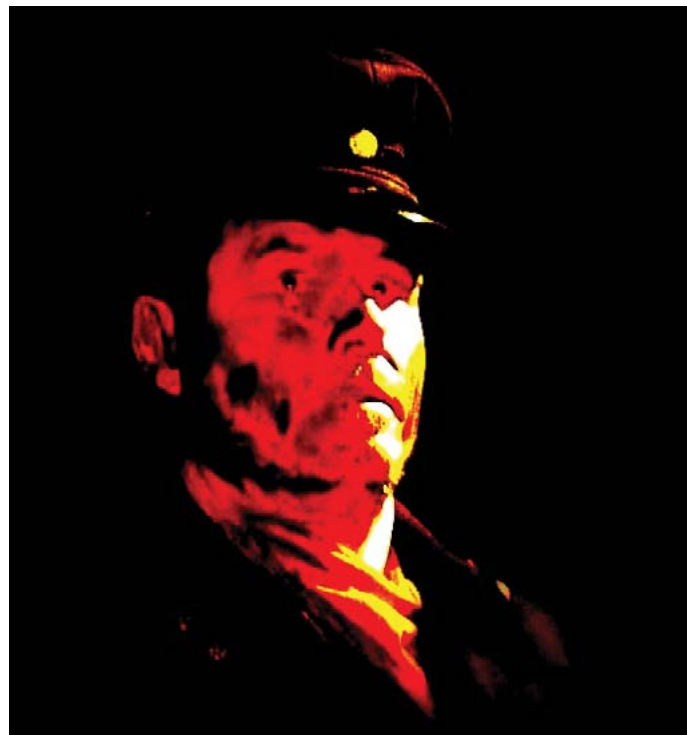
8TH NOV. LANTERN THEATRE.
REVIEWER – SARA HILL.

It was a wet and windy night, but that was a perfect backdrop to a performance of ghost stories at the Lantern Theatre. Enter Montagu Furzan, psychic investigator, who guided us through four supernatural tales: The Listeners (Walter de la Mare), The Rose Garden (M.R. James), The Black Cat (Edgar Allen Poe) and The Signalman by Charles Dickens.

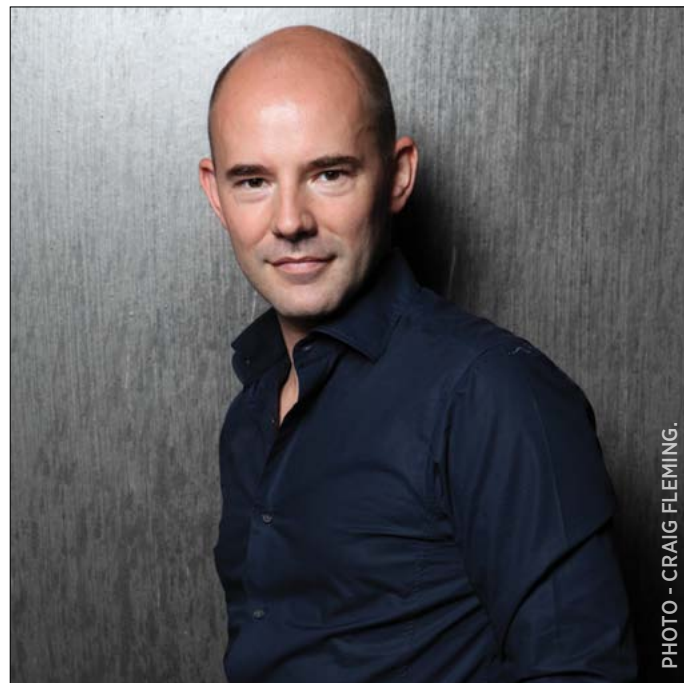
The adaptations were written by Simon Corble who, along with Paul Sullivan, also performed them. In first half the pair took turns to monologue, each commanding the stage for half an hour alone and creating a palpable atmosphere of tension. The slowly escalating unease of The Rose Garden sent shivers down the spine and the descent into murderous madness of the condemned man in The Black Cat had us all on the edges of our seats.

The second half belonged to The Signalman, with Sullivan taking the titular role. His portrayal of the lonely signalman haunted by portents of danger and the spectre of his own death was beautifully restrained. Restless anxiety and mental anguish flowed from his hunched shoulders and furrowed brow.

The Victorian splendour of the Lantern Theatre was most fitting and Found Theatre's production was very much at home in it. These were not Hollywood yarns of shocks and gore, just classically told tales of creeping and titillating dread.



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INTERVIEW: DANIEL EVANS.

Daniel Evans took on the role of Sheffield Theatres Artistic Director in June 2009 after the reopening of the newly-designed Crucible. With more experience under his belt and big plans for 2011, we spoke to Daniel about the future of the theatres.

What were your intentions for the theatres when taking on the role of Artistic Director?

I wanted to consolidate and build upon the excellent work of my predecessors, particularly Michael Grandage and Samuel West, by producing a whole range of plays in exciting, challenging, enriching ways. I also wanted to open the building up and encourage the people who live and work in the region to feel like the theatre was theirs, that somehow they owned it.

How do you think your background in acting affected how you approached the role?

Being an actor comes in useful in all kinds of ways. The principles of the rehearsal room are applicable in the office, at board meetings, post-show discussions. They all require good listening, a degree of empathy and persuasion.

What has the reception been like to the new Crucible?

Absolutely wonderful. The building is still getting fantastic reviews from all kinds of people, but mostly audiences. This is gratifying, as most of the redevelopment money was spent on improving the audience's experience.

Tell us about your performance in Sondheim's 'Company' next year.

It's not made yet, so I can't tell you about the production, but I can say that I feel extremely excited by it. It has one of Sondheim's most dynamic scores. The story is also intriguing because of its exploration of love and marriage in all its facets, the ups and the downs. I've wanted to play the part of Bobby for a long time, so I can't wait.

What else can our readers look forward to at the theatres this Christmas and in 2011?

Our Christmas musical, **Me and My Girl**, will explode onto the Crucible Stage at the beginning of December and it promises to be an exhilarating night out. In January, Sheffield Theatres embarks on one of our most ambitious projects to date: the David Hare season. We're dedicating all three of our spaces to the work of one of the most significant figures in modern, post-war British drama. I'm directing David's thrilling exploration of the Church of England, **Racing Demon**, while Thea Sharrock will give us an up-close-and-personal production of **Plenty** and theatre legend Peter Gill is returning to Sheffield to direct **The Breath of Life**, an intriguing play about two women who once shared a man. And that's just the start of the year!

Book & Lyrics by **L. Arthur Rose**
and **Douglas Furber**
Music by **Noel Gay**
Book revised by **Stephen Fry**
Contributions to revisions by **Mike Ockrent**



Crucible Theatre

Thu 2 December 2010 – Sat 29 January 2011

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sheffieldtheatres.co.uk

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A ROUNDUP OF THIS YEAR'S DOC/FEST.

MY PICK OF THE FEST.

With considerable regret, I was only able to attend a handful of screenings at this year's Sheffield Doc/Fest. Nevertheless, I would like to praise its impressive balance of content, which felt more international than ever with a variety of very well laid-out categories.

By default or personal inclination, my pick of the fest is: **William S. Burroughs – A Man Within** by Yony Leyser and the insight into Ingmar Bergman's cinematic world **...But Film is My Mistress** by Stig Björkman. These are essentially two very different feature-length documentaries on two iconic figures whose groundbreaking explorations of the recesses of the human mind have been (and will continue to be) highly influential.

As I stepped out into the cold, rainy night after the screening of William S. Burroughs – A Man Within, I soon realised that my sense of profound disappointment was not so much to do with any formal appreciation of the film. It was actually rooted in a statement I once read by American film director Todd Haynes, in which he said something along the lines of “as a homosexual filmmaker, I see it as my duty to always present a positive portrayal of homosexuality in my films”. Surely, one could say that his very first feature, **Poison** (1991), contradicts that by having enough Jean Genet (and his more predatory/destructive side of homosexuality) squeezed into it, but **Velvet Goldmine** (1998) is a clear example of such a ‘moral’ stance getting in the way, turning his homage to the glam rock period into a gay love story and losing track of the ambivalence that pervaded it. The only source of redemption I can personally find is that between those two films, Haynes made one of the most remarkable works of cinematic precision – **Safe** (1995) with Julianne Moore – which simultaneously remains very queer at heart. Also, in my view, its factual, virtually incontestable quality and tone still puts most documentaries to shame.

So the problem with Yony Leyser’s film on Burroughs is precisely a certain tendency to over-emphasise the homosexuality of his subject. He does so in a variety of ways, which seldom contribute to his initial intention to humanise the man. From his choice of contributors to his structuring of the historical facts, almost every step is jeopardised by this barely hidden agenda.

His documentary somewhat fails as the well-rounded portrayal it aspires to be, but there are some effective moments that are touching in their honesty and intimacy. Patti Smith's confession of wanting to be Burroughs's companion for life comes to mind, along with the footage of him with Allen Ginsberg that is filled with wonderful tenderness.

There isn't, unfortunately, a proper appreciation of Burroughs's output as a writer, neither of the way it was so intrinsically connected with his eventful life. The myth and historical circumstances surrounding it are given attention, but always from a mere worshipper's perspective. The author's dismissal of a lot of the ideas and movements which claimed him as a forefront figure tends to be suppressed or only mentioned in passing; after all, if that was to be given the appropriate relevance, the entire approach of the film would've had to be re-thought.

I've always preferred Burroughs's personal elaboration on his sexual tendencies, when he says that since he considers women another species and therefore, not human, he would rather be with his own. This is something that has been neatly kept out of Leyser's film, since it would undermine what I fear is his only angle on the subject.

What one documentary lacks in objectivity and impartiality, the other makes up with extra clarity of information and sobriety of form.

Two years before his death in 2007, Ingmar Bergman donated a vast number of manuscripts and footage he had collected throughout his career to the Swedish Film Institute. Last year, Stig Björkman (film critic, filmmaker and a close friend of Bergman's) released the first film to incorporate some of that previously unseen footage. **Images from The Playground** (2009) was made out of Bergman's early amateur films, and now we have the privilege of watching his second incursion into that precious vault.

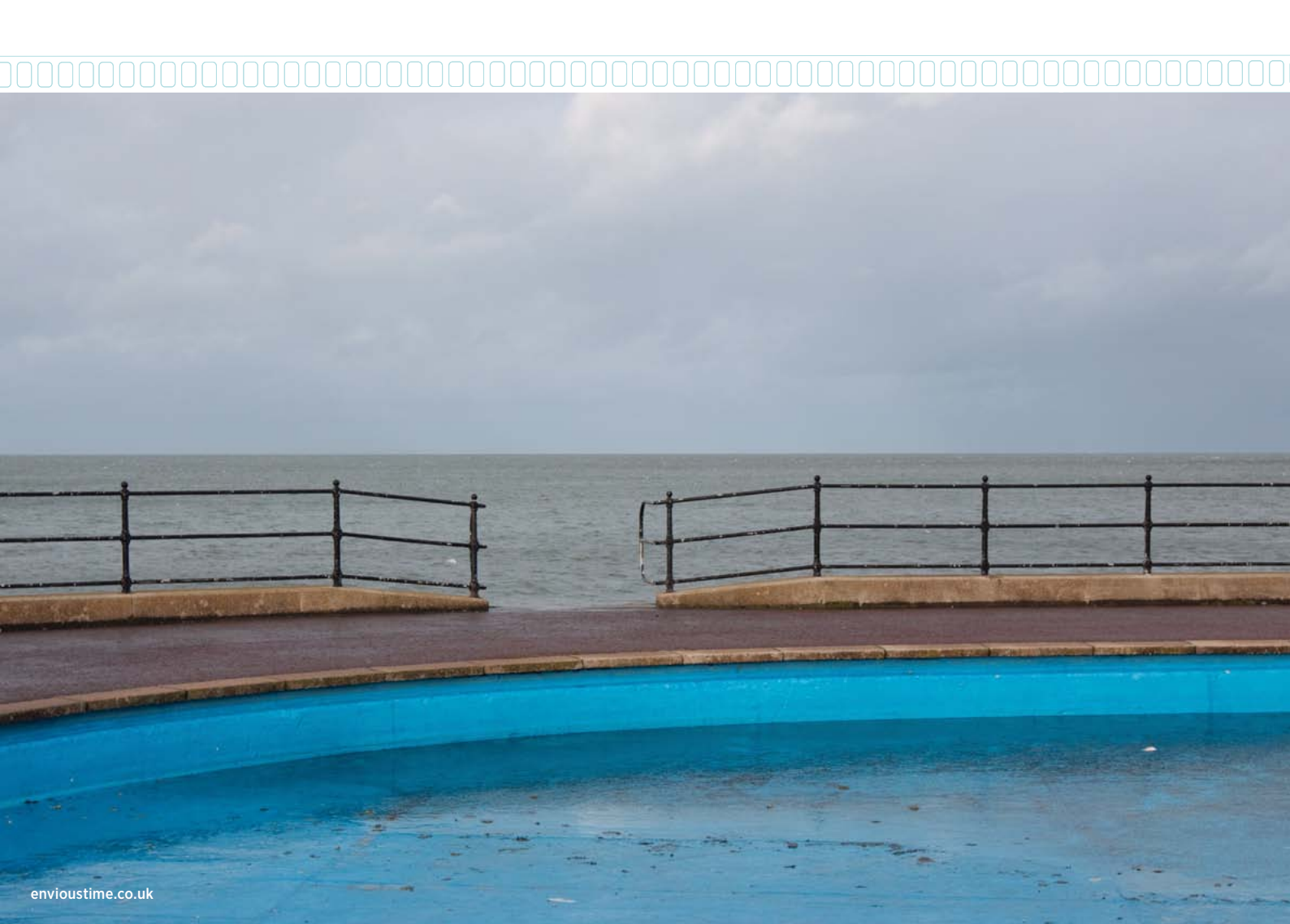
...But Film is My Mistress couldn't be more concise and honest. Its title refers to one of the great auteur's quotes – “Theatre is my life...but Film is my mistress” – and its contents comprise entirely of behind-the-scenes footage from eight of his unquestionable masterpieces. When asked why those eight and not any of the other (even more revered) Bergman films, Björkman was reassuringly matter-of-fact: most of them already had plenty of documentaries made about them. This refreshing nonchalance was taken even further when he told us that all the directors who contributed with commentaries (which included Martin Scorsese, Woody Allen and Lars Von Trier) were actually filmed, but that he felt their visual presence to be an intrusion and decided to retain nothing but their voices. This admirable approach shows an utter commitment to his subject and results in a far more economical film.

The documentary opens with Bergman's muse, Liv Ullmann, introducing what is arguably the greatest and most important cinematic exercise ever made - **Persona** (1966) - and closes with the director's most poignant and final film – **Saraband** (2003). In between, there is incredibly insightful footage of Bergman at work on the often joyous set of six of his other films.

Tying in with my earlier point, the highlight goes to a moment in which Bergman directs an actor playing a gay character in **From the Life of The Marionettes** (1980). Aware of his inability to understand the affectations of speech and behaviour which colour a vast cross-section of the homosexual community, the director dissected every minute aspect of the language in the monologue the actor was supposed to deliver and came up with something incomparably raw and true. Whilst always having the interests of the film in mind, the result of such laboured direction is also filled with warmth and compassion.

In this sense, one last thought arises: if Bergman, myself or any other straight filmmaker was ever predetermined to only present favourable representations of heterosexuals in their films, Cinema would be a very dull medium. This reductive approach simply has no place in true explorations of human beings, who are always more elaborate than any label given or adopted.

JOÃO PAULO SIMÕES IS A PORTUGUESE FILMMAKER LIVING AND WORKING INDEPENDENTLY IN SHEFFIELD. HIS WORKS INCLUDE ANTLERS OF REASON AND AN ARRAY OF MUSIC VIDEOS AND DOCUMENTARIES. VISIT CAPTURAFILMES.BLOGSPOT.COM.



GET YOUR DOCS OUT FOR THE LADS.

ALEX KEEGAN.

Amongst the testosterone-fuelled anarchy of the likes of Werner Herzog and William S. Burroughs, a small proportion of Doc/Fest's programme offered glimmers of hope for those seeking unique female voices. The star of the festival, Joan Rivers, made a countless number of irreverent appearances in various press conferences and Q&As, all in aid of her autobiographical doc, **Joan Rivers: A Piece of Work**. Filmmakers Ricki Stern and Annie Sundberg were given year-long access to Rivers' life as she toured around the US, playing all number of comedy shows in an attempt to revive her ever-sagging career. Like a blended concoction of plastic, witticisms and Judaism, the carefully crafted Rivers finds it difficult to gain the recognition she deserves, despite being one of the most ground-breaking comedians in her lifetime. The film is unashamedly candid and Ms. Rivers never shies away from content that others would be too timid to divulge. In a tragic sequence, we see Joan and her equally outspoken daughter Melissa relive the aftermath of their husband/father's suicide by way of starring in a cathartic Hollywood movie. It is this honesty which has formed the basis for Joan Rivers' career as a comedienne, and is what really permeates the surface of an entertaining film.

This side of the pond and about as far removed from the glamour of Broadway as is possible, Channel 4 has been commissioning short docs under the banner 'First Cuts' in order to help young female filmmakers get their voices heard. The highlight of these is Ruth Kelly's **Girls on the Pull**, featuring victims of a relatively ignored and misunderstood disorder Trichotillomania or TTM, an impulse-driven illness that drives women to violently pull out their hair. Despite the crassness of the title, the film deals with its subject in a dignified and empowering way, following a salon owner called Lucinda as she supports three girls in their struggle to overcome the affliction.

For those seeking something more pseudo-philosophical, Sophie Fiennes (sister of Ralph) travels to the south of France to meet visionary installation artist Anselm Kiefer in a contemplative fusion of cinema and sculpture. **Over Your Cities Grass Will Grow**. Kiefer's sometimes pretentious outlook on life is contrasted with some beautifully slow sequences in which gigantic installations are constructed from salvageable raw materials such as glass, concrete and molten lead. Fiennes is a director who enjoys channelling the voice of artists through her reflective cinematic eye, and it is the meditative parts in which she shows Kiefer brutally at work that are the film's greatest success.

One issue that never fails to fire up opinions is abortion, and never has this controversy been so heated as it is today in the United States. Evangelical Christian movements are rife and growing in number, as the mid-West becomes increasingly disillusioned due to the demise of the 'American Dream'. Faith seems of paramount importance to those desperate for meaning in their life at the expense of rationality and honesty, and these conflicts are hauntingly encapsulated in the refreshingly stoic **12th & Delaware**. On the corner of an inconsequential street in Fort Pierce, Florida, pro-life and pro-choice clinics sit opposite each other. Christian protesters flock the street outside the latter wielding placards depicting mangled, bloody foetuses and screaming, misguided medical falsities at shameful mothers-to-be. The real tragedy is the way in which the pro-life clinic treats the girls as walking incubators rather than women with the capacity for independent thought and contemplative choice. To use a quote from one of the directors, these women are "pawns in an ideological war with no end in sight". Only one choice seems right for those who cannot realistically bring up a child and that choice sadly fails to correspond with the beliefs of the Christian church. Rarely does a film take such a removed look at an issue so contentious and the amount of access directors Rachel Grady and Heidi Ewing (of Jesus Camp fame) get should be lauded in itself. All in all, chilling stuff.

To close the festival, the Special Jury Award-winning **Pink Saris** couldn't have done a better job. It takes pride of place in a series of films by director Kim Longinotto that highlight the lives of exceptional women. The film documents the life of Sampat Pal, a woman disregarded as 'untouchable' by the Hindu caste system only to become a champion for women's rights in Uttar Pradesh, India. Sampat spends her days furiously running around rural India in an attempt to emancipate the women of surrounding villages. With the aid of the police force, who seem to be scared into submission, she arrests husbands and families who have been abusive to their wives and daughters. "No Gods are greater than woman" is one of the many mantras she shouts enthusiastically at all those who fail to accept the decline of traditional misogynist values. It is to Longinotto's credit that Sampat is never portrayed as anything but human, as the film dispels the messianic reputation that others and even Sampat herself suggests.

FLASH! IGNITE YOUR IMAGINATION

2010

ANDY KIRKPATRICK
Off The Wall

Weds 1st Dec.
8.00pm (doors 7.30pm)

The Foundry
University of Sheffield
Students' Union
Western Bank, S10 2TG

Tickets: £9.50 / £6.50 cons

The Exchange present
DUNCAN GREEN
Head of Research Oxfam
The Age of Scarcity:
what do resource
constraints on land,
water and carbon mean
for development?

Fri 3rd Dec. ((-EXCHANGE))
6.30pm

St. Georges Church
217 Portobello, Norton,
Sheffield S1 4

FREE / no ticket needed

An audience with
PETER THORNTON
Thorntons – My Life
in the Family Business

Mon 6th Dec.
8.00pm (doors 7.30pm)

The Auditorium
University of Sheffield
Students' Union
Western Bank, S10 2TG

Tickets: £5 / £4 cons

The Exchange present
PETER STRINGFELLOW
Gentleman's Clubs:
Commodification or
liberalisation of women?

Weds 8 Dec. ((-EXCHANGE))
6.00pm

St. Georges Church
217 Portobello, Norton,
Sheffield S1 4

FREE / no ticket needed

TICKETS / INFO
Sheffield Students Union:
Box Office 0114 222 8777
sheffieldstudentsunion.com
facebook.com/flash.sheffield
ticketline.co.uk
ticketmaster.co.uk
gigantic.com
seetickets.com

All events are open to Non-Students

A Series of Inspirational Events

2011

The Exchange present
**SHOULD STREET SEX
WORK BE LEGALISED?**

Tues 15th Feb. ((-EXCHANGE))
6pm

The Auditorium
University of Sheffield
Students' Union
Western Bank, S10 2TG

FREE ticketed event

ANGELOS EPITHEMIU

Sat 19th Feb.
7.30pm (doors 7.00pm)

The Octagon,
University of Sheffield
Students' Union,
Western Bank, S10 2TG

Tickets: £17.50 advance

STEPHEN K. AMOS
'The Best Medicine'

Sat 5th Mar.
7.30pm (doors 7.00pm)

The Octagon,
University of Sheffield
Students' Union,
Western Bank, S10 2TG

Tickets: £18.50 / £16.50 cons

TIM VINE
'The Joke-ative'

Weds 11th Mar.
7.30pm (doors 7.00pm)

The Octagon,
University of Sheffield
Students' Union,
Western Bank, S10 2TG

Tickets: £17 / £15 cons

Off The Shelf
History Weekend with
MICHAEL WOOD
The Story of England

Thurs 3 Feb.
7.30pm (doors 7.00pm)

The Auditorium
University of Sheffield
Students' Union,
Western Bank, S10

Tickets: £8 / £5 cons

Sheffield Students' Union

LIVE

The Tuesday Club
Birthday (Part 3)
Jagga (LIVE)
+ Rusko
Tues 23 Nov @ Foundry + Fusion
11pm - 3am \ Tickets £6 adv (18+)

A singer/songwriter/producer from East London, Jagga is a star in the making signed to EMI and touring with Magnetic Man and Rusko in the autumn - remember where you saw him first Speaking of Rusko... he'll be on hand to smash up the dancefloor in his own inimitable way!

The View
(Band Camp Launch)
Jack Rabbit (LIVE)
+ Superfox (LIVE)
Thurs 25 Nov @ Fusion \ 10.30pm - 2am
Tickets £4 adv (18+) \ Tickets 2 for 1 in Nov!

Calling all bands! This year's band comp is launched by last year's finalists Jack Rabbit, Superfox and Maps of Columbus. If you're a fan of fresh music you'll witness three great up and coming bands. If you're a musician, tonight you can get all the info you need to enter the band comp 2010/11. The club night follows with DJ Nicola Bear playing modern and classic indie until the early hours.

Live present:
Missing Andy (LIVE)
Mon 29 Nov @ Fusion
7pm \ Tickets £6.50 adv (14+)

Missing Andy were the runners up of 'Must Be The Music' on Sky presented by Fenne Cotton and judged by Jamie Cullum, Shazelle Spiller and Dizzee Rascal. Their success on the show has led to a surge in interest in the band with chart success with singles 'The Way We're Made' and 'Sing For The Dear'.

The Tuesday Club
Benji B & Ramadanman (LIVE)
Tues 30 Nov @ Foundry + Fusion
11pm - 2.30am \ Tickets £4 adv (18+)

BBC Radio 1's Benji B joins us fresh from inheriting the BBC experimental show from Mary Anne Hobbes. Coupled tonight with the futuristic sounds of Ramadanman, this will be a night of next level music representing the best in what's next!

Live Wire
(Every Thursday)
Playground Mafia (LIVE)
Thurs 2 Dec @ Fusion
10.30pm - 2am \ Tickets £4 adv (18+)

'There's changes afoot in Sheffield and here's a prime example - Playground Mafia have created a buzz in the city. A blend of all things electro, house and dance which has certainly got the crowds jumping' - Exposed

The Tuesday Club
Gentleman's Dub Club (LIVE)
Tues 7 Dec @ Foundry + Fusion
11pm - 2.30am \ Tickets £4 adv (18+)

Outlook festival headliners and kings of the summer's festival programme, the amazing live dub reggae band are playing an exclusive set as part of their 'Emergency' tour. Plus TTC's Andy H brings a showcase set packed full of dancefloor smashers!

Live Wire
(Every Thursday)
The View (LIVE)
Sound of Guns (LIVE)
Thurs 9 Dec @ Foundry + Fusion
10.30pm \ Tickets £4 adv (18+)

The View are back for a special show at Live Wire ahead of the release of their third album in the new year. Their latest single 'Sunday' was given 'the hottest record on the planet' status by Zane Lowe on Radio One.

The Blackout (LIVE)
+ We Are The Ocean (LIVE)
+ The Guns (LIVE)
Sat 11 Dec @ Foundry
7pm \ Tickets £12 adv (14+)

After a year of headlining the Karanga! tour, touring with Limp Bizkit and You Me At Six, The Blackout close the year at Sheffield Students' Union with We Are The Ocean in support.

The Bluetones (LIVE)
Sat 11 Dec @ Fusion
7pm \ Tickets £13 adv (14+)

The Bluetones have released three top 10 albums and thirteen top 40 singles, including their greatest hit 'Slight Return'. Their 6th album 'New Athens' was released earlier this year.

The Tuesday Club
Gaslamp Killer.
DJ Fresh. Joker.
Danny Byrd.
Kutmah. (+more)
Stamina MC
Tues 14 Dec @ Foundry + Fusion
11pm - 3.30am \ Tickets £9 adv (18+)

Superstar DnB talent in the house tonight with crossover talents DJ Fresh and Danny Byrd plus amazing future music from Joker, Kutmah and Californian evil beat-genius, Gaslamp Killer who'll give us one of the most amazing shows you'll see this year!

I Like Trains (LIVE)
Wed 9 Feb 2011 @ Fusion
7pm \ Tickets £7 adv (14+)

'Xylophones, vintage synths and lap steels create the impression of slowly melting, ancient icebergs glittering in the sunshine. A true, but quiet victory' - NME review of new album 'He Who Saw The Deep' 8/10.

Nov. - Feb. 2010/11

Ticket Outlets.
Sheffield Students' Union
Box Office. 0114 222 8777
www.sheffieldstudentsunion.com
ticketline.co.uk
ticketmaster.co.uk
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GOAL SOUL. GOALSOUL.NET

This month it will be one year since a couple of chaps saw their big idea become a fledgling reality and we reckon they're on to a proper winner.

The idea was, in hindsight, so perfectly simple and it went something like this; the game of Football is far more than the world's favourite past time. It is rooted in culture and daily life across continents and transcends language through a shared sense of appreciation for the beauty of the game. It is also, however, so often maligned for its association with the noisy few, suffering the stigma of loutish behaviour and gaudy, tacky sportswear that goes with it. No more.

After a couple of animated chats through the bottoms of their glasses in the pub, founders Christian and Ricky decided that they would take the plunge and set up a company for the millions of people who are real fans of the game, its history and its characters, but who don't want a tracksuit or a shirt emblazoned with huge sponsors and manufacturer's logos. And so, goalsoul was born.

The now three-man team (with mid-season signing, Rudi) has the perfect formation of players, with backgrounds in design, I.T and marketing along with a serious and committed drive to make it work. When talking to the lads their passion is infectious and their work rate is inspirational. After just a year of trading they have already got a cracking website with explanations of their designs and even youtube links to the players and incidents featured on them, as well as a large range of designs available to buy direct from the site. If you visit you could win a t-shirt of your choice by entering their Christmas competition, too.

The designing of t-shirts is just the beginning for this ambitious trio and, with the word out and the market waiting, the goalsoul brand is sure to be a familiar one very soon.



DRAM. 21 COMMONSIDE. 0114 268 3117.

The Dram Shop is our favourite off license in all the land of Sheffield. We at Now Then don't muck around when we use the word favourite - or 'best place', for that matter - so readers out there had better take note: The Dram shop is ACE.

It can be found in Commonsides, which if you head up Barber Road from Sheff Uni, you'll run face-first into on your right. Originally opened in 1982, this genuinely loved and archaically shelved shop has been run by its current owners Tony and Sandra since 2005. It is without doubt one of the best places in Sheffield to buy quality sourced and priced alcoholic beverages.

You'll be able to see a little of the inside of this lovely shop from the photo above, but believe us when we tell you that once you get a foot in the door, that's not half of your viewing pleasure. The Dram Shop has been serving quality whiskies, ales, lagers and wines from all over the world for as long as this writer can remember, including the likes of locally brewed Kelham Island ales alongside brewers Innis & Gunn and their oak-aged beer from Scotland. They also stock a phenomenal variety of whiskeys and European lagers. In fact, Tony's current dram of choice and our recommended Christmas booze is a ten year old Benromach malt whisky from the top Shelf. Get some while stocks last.

If spirits are not your thing but you are partial to a tipple during the festive season, then organic wines might be your thing. With no artificial flavourings or chemicals, you'd be surprised how many glasses of organic wine you can drink without sealing yourself into hangover doom the following morning. Try to believe anything is possible,.

The shelves are wooden, not plahogany. The beers are sold individually and as cheaply as possible, not in brightly coloured multi-packs which reduce your overall choice. The staff are gentle and well informed, not indifferent and underage. This month, if you bring in a copy of Now Then you'll receive 10% off all drinks purchased. Wham bam, thank you ma'am.

FAVOURITES.

OUR PICK OF THE BUNCH.

MERCURY TAXIS. 116 NORTHFIELD RD. 0114 266 2662.

Having been users of the fine services at Mercury for many years, it struck me that it'd be nice to visit their HQ and have a nosey, and I was very happy that I did. Talking to manager Pete in his office it became clear that Mercury are far from a profit-driven company, having been run with family values and ethics at their core for the last 22 years, as well as enjoying an exclusive partnership with the University of Sheffield. The team makes sure that each customer is treated as an individual, while they never charge double or triple time. In fact, from Christmas Eve at 6 pm until the 27th at 6 am you will only be charged the normal rate plus 2 quid. Surely the best deal in town.

Mercury now serves a huge 3,000,000 happy customers a year. We recommend you become the three million and 1st.

PORTER BOOKSHOP. 227 SHARROW VALE ROAD. 0114 266 7762.

On more than one occasion this writer has found himself stood inside of one of Sharrow Vale Road's most unassuming and bijou establishments, just idly gazing around. There can't be many things better than getting to spend every day in this diminutive den for the knowledge-thirsty and its cosy chaos looks especially inviting at this time of year.

Buying and selling for more-than-reasonable prices and specialising in the Humanities, its subjects-per-square inch ratio must be right up there with the best of 'em - an arm-span will see you sorted for Taoism and the Battle for Stalingrad. The shelves are crammed full of forgotten facts waiting to be rediscovered and the teetering towers of history, philosophy and religion about the place are often used to sit little plant pots on as well. Independent, useful and thriving, these places aren't supposed to exist anymore, are they?

LATE NIGHT BUSES. FRI/SAT, LEOPOLD STREET, £2.50.

Taxis are relatively cheap in Sheffield, but sometimes you don't want to take a £10-£15 hit when you start lagging behind your mates on a night out.

Help is at hand. Last month, three new late night bus routes relaunched in Sheffield, running on Friday and Saturday nights at 1am, 2am and 3am from Leopold Street in town. The three routes cover a number of areas, including Crookes, Broomhill, Walkley, Hillsborough, Chapeltown, Hunters Bar, Woodseats, Manor Top and more. £2.50 is pretty reasonable and all.

Search 'Sheffield Late Buses' on Facebook for more details.

WEIRD PHYSICS. 17TH DECEMBER, 6PM. ST GEORGE'S LECTURE THEATRE, SCIENCEBRAINWAVES.COM/EVENTS

On Friday 17th, Now Then will be in attendance for the free lecture by Dr Paul Stevenson on the often brain-straining topic of 'Weird Physics'. The lecture will cover the areas of science that don't quite follow the rules and the ideas we come up with to make sense of what we find.

We would like to think we are not alone in being at least mildly baffled by the concept of a simultaneously living and dead cat, or the possibility of an infinite number of parallel universes. Therefore we would expect this event to raise an eyebrow of interest in even the least 'scientific' among us, so it may be prudent to book your place sharpish to avoid missing out. You can reserve free tickets at the above website.

THE WICK AT BOTH ENDS. 149-151 WEST STREET. 0114 2723039.

Something ace has happened at the Wick.

In early October, Chef Nick Booth was brought in and given carte blanche to create a whole new food menu and ooh, didn't he do well. Nick's previous and varied experience has made for a brilliant diversity to what's on offer, with something to suit whatever taste and appetite you bring. There is also a great mix of both simple and gourmet dishes available, including the subtly delicious pan-fried smoked haddock with creamy mash in a mustard sauce (topped with a poached egg), the robust venison hot-pot and the classic rib-eye steak, a firm favourite. The quality of the ingredients and the presentation of the food are leagues above their modest prices, with only the steak exceeding £7.50 on the whole menu. Bottom line, the food we had there was quite comfortably as good as any restaurant we've eaten at all year.

HOLDING YOUR KNIFE AND FORK PROPERLY. BANK ST ARTS, 32-40 BANK STREET. 0114 346 3034. / BANKSTREETARTS.COM

Bank St Arts is just round the corner from the Boardwalk. It is one of Sheffield's unsung gems for the opportunities it provides local artists and the quality of its output.

This month, Lorna Barrowclough will create a piece of work in seven days that explores the wonderment of 'small, crude, replicated objects' of particular place meaning. In this case - with a nod to Sheffield heritage - the objects are knives and forks.

Once constructed within the basement area of Bank Street Arts, the pieces will go on sale to the public. The viewer will be allowed to literally buy into the piece, thus exploring the question: will we consume anything?



END.
YOU HEARD.

FORUM SHOPS

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4. NEW YORK DELI.
5. DRAM SHOP.
6. BEANIES.

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7. THE YORK.
8. MOOCH.

CITY CENTRE.

9. SHEFFIELD UNIVERSITY.
10. THE HARLEY.
11. RED HOUSE.
12. ST GEORGES THEATRE.
13. THE WICK AT BOTH ENDS.
14. THE BOWERY.
15. REAL TIME MUSIC.
16. RARE AND RACY.
17. FORUM BAR & SHOPS.
18. COMMON ROOM.
19. OLD HOUSE.
20. BUNGALOWS AND BEARS.
21. DQ.
22. CORPORATION.
23. PLUG.
24. THOU ART.
25. SHEFFIELD THEATRES.
26. THE SHOWROOM.
27. THE RUTLAND ARMS.

ECCLESALL ROAD.

28. THE POMONA.
29. KUJI.
30. COCOA.
31. MISH MASH.

SHARROW VALE ROAD

32. OTTOS RESTAURANT
33. THE LESCAR
34. RONEYS
35. SHARROW MARROW
36. TWO STEPS FISHERIES
37. PORTER BOOKS

LONDON ROAD

38. LOVE YOUR HAIR
39. SMART VENUE COFFEE
40. THE OLD CROWN
41. CAFE EURO

NETHEREDGE

42. THE LANTERN THEATRE
43. WICK WIRE
44. THE OLD SWEET SHOP
45. POPS SUPERMARKET

